

The Standing Commission on The Church in Metropolitan Areas

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MEMBERSHIP

	Vote
The Rt. Rev. James W. Montgomery (1982)	concurring
The Rt. Rev. Joseph T. Heistand (1985)	concurring
The Rt. Rev. John T. Walker (1985)	concurring
The Rev. Leopoldo J. Alard (1985, resigned, <i>replaced by</i> The Rev. Lyle Noiseyhawk	concurring
The Rev. Michael S. Kendall (1982), <i>Chairman</i>	concurring
The Rev. G. H. Jack Woodard (1985)	concurring
Mrs. Marjorie L. Christie (1985)	concurring
Mr. Marcus A. Cummings (1982)	concurring
Romualdo Gonzales (1985), resigned, <i>replaced by</i> Willie R. Davila	concurring
Samuel Im (1982)	concurring
Nancy B. McGarrigle (1985), <i>Secretary</i>	concurring
The Hon. Clay Myers (1982)	concurring

INTRODUCTION

The Standing Commission on the Church in Metropolitan Areas was originally organized as a Joint Commission following the General Convention of 1973. It was renewed following the General Convention of 1976, and was created a Standing Commission by the General Convention of 1979.

The Rev. Richard Gary, National Missions Officer on the staff of the Episcopal Church Center served as a consultant and liaison.

The Commission thanks the Rt. Rev. John M. Allin, D.D., the Presiding Bishop; Dr. Charles R. Lawrence, President, House of Deputies; and Dr. James R. Gundrum, Executive Officer of the General Convention—for their invaluable advice and assistance.

We are grateful to the Episcopal Theological Seminary of the Southwest for providing a visiting fellowship which enabled a Commission member, the Rev. G. H. Jack Woodard, to research and write the first draft of this report.

The Rev. John Kater served as editor and theological advisor.

We appreciate the support of Dr. Robert R. Parks, Rector of Trinity Parish, New York City, and his staff, for their aid in printing and distributing drafts of this report.

The Commission commends the Rev. Canon Lloyd Casson and the Board of the Episcopal Urban Caucus for their advice to the Commission and valuable contribution to the ministry of the Church in our nation and cities.

We support the work of the Rev. Earle Neal and the Coalition for Human Needs and urge the continued support of the whole Church for that body's budget, ministry, and vision.

The long-range goal that the General Convention of 1979 established for the Commission was to "develop recommendations and strategies which will be of concrete assistance to the Church in metropolitan areas, in shaping new patterns of mission and ministry."

The immediate goal the General Convention charged the Commission with was to "devise an action strategy for consideration by the 1982 General Convention in regard to the role of the General Convention and the Executive Council in the implementation of a program of urban mission and evangelism in urban and other deprived areas, with primary focus on the local congregations."

To that end we met seven times during the triennium, held one consultation with representatives of several dioceses, participated in the 1980, 1981, and 1982 assemblies of the Episcopal Urban Caucus, and maintained on-going dialogue with other groups committed to similar concerns, including the Church and City Conference, and the Episcopal Urban Caucus. We also reviewed the Episcopal Church Center's program and resources for metropolitan mission and ministry.

A REVIEW OF RECENT HISTORY

In undertaking its work, the Standing Commission has been conscious of the complex history of the Episcopal Church's participation in metropolitan ministry.

The Fifties

The urban migration which was accelerated during the Second World War continued in the post-War period. Black Americans in large numbers sought a better life in the industrial centers which had been opened to them by the economic needs of the War and its aftermath. They moved from South to North, and from country to city, where they were joined by whites from the small town and rural heartland and by Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, and others, awaked by new hopes. As they settled in the city, affluent and middle-class white neighborhoods passed rapidly through a transitional period, many of the original residents moving to the suburbs. In most cases, their parishes followed them. The well-known "religious boom" of the fifties, largely a middle-class phenomenon, had little effect on Episcopal churches in the inner city. Some survived as white enclaves, dependent for their continued identity on endowments and nostalgia; many others were closed and the properties were sold. Some became strong, predominantly black and/or Hispanic congregations. A very few succeeded in becoming stabilized multi-racial parishes.

The rapid social change through which the Episcopal Church was passing went largely unnoticed. Its successes in the suburbs, and its predominantly white middle-class membership, determined its priorities. Its educational materials and its financial program betrayed little awareness of the needs of the urban or rural poor.

Nevertheless, a few pioneers were undertaking mission and ministry in poor communities. Innovative clergy with supportive bishops were beginning to reshape desperate inner-city parishes: in Harlem, Jersey City, East Harlem, and on New York's

Lower East Side; in North Philadelphia, Roxbury, Cleveland, St. Louis; and San Francisco's Mission District, East Los Angeles, Watts, Washington, D.C., Houston and elsewhere among migrant workers and in other places at home and "overseas," these pioneers were developing a new style of ministry to and with poor and oppressed people. Their efforts were largely uncoordinated and unsupported by any commitment on the part of the national Church. But a very few national staff persons, including Tollie L. Caution and G. Paul Musselman, worked to lift these ministries up to view and to recruit talent and vocations for them.

These enterprises were the successors of earlier institutions, such as "city mission societies" and "settlement houses," which sought to minister remedially to poor people—often from a benevolent paternalism that almost never inquired into the root causes of poverty and injustice.

For the Episcopal Church, the decade of the Fifties was also a time of people on the move; a time when the Church as a whole had only begun to hear the biblical imperative to become involved in the battle for justice and against racism.

The Sixties

The movement from idealism to chaos which marks the Sixties for Americans is reflected in our own Church's history. President Kennedy's passionate call for service ("Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country") found its response in an outpouring of public support for ventures such as the Peace Corps, and in the burgeoning civil rights movement. New organizations such as the Episcopal Society for Cultural and Racial Unity urged the Church to take its stand boldly for racial justice as an integral part of its mission. At the 1961 General Convention, a new group of rectors of large city congregations and deans of urban cathedrals — known as the Church and City Conference — won approval for a major focus on "urban mission," a joint program undertaken by all departments of the Executive Council organization. It included such figures as John Heuss of Trinity Parish, New York; Julian Bartlett of Grace Cathedral, San Francisco; Kurt Junker of Trinity Church, Tulsa; Paul Moore of Christ Church Cathedral, Indianapolis; Kilmer Myers of Intercession Chapel, New York; and others. The Conference then became more inclusive and its first black members were St. Julian Simpkins, Nathan Wright, and Joseph Robinson. From 1961 through 1964, the Joint Urban Program, first directed by James Morton, focused on three objectives: raising the consciousness of Episcopalians with regard to urban realities through major conferences called "Metabagdad"; designation of twelve dioceses as "pilots" for the rest of the Church; and the development of training programs for urban ministry (including the Ecumenical Training Center for Urban Mission in Chicago).

The 1964 General Convention elected John Hines to succeed Presiding Bishop Arthur Lichtenberger, and approved the plea by the Church and City Conference and others to continue the Joint Urban Program as a top priority. The Episcopal Churchwomen voted to participate in funding the urban program and allocated significant United Thank Offering monies to it. Funding by General Convention and the UTO was designated for supporting and analyzing experimental urban ministries; publication of a quarterly — *Church in Metropolis*; and training. Thirteen denominations and several foundations joined in developing the Urban Training Center in Chicago. James Morton succeeded Kilmer Myers as its head; Jack Woodard replaced Morton as head of the Episcopal Church's Joint Urban Program. "Pilot" dioceses developed skills in areas such as community organization, Christian Education in the urban context, drug ministries, advocacy on public-policy issues which affect the poor, team ministry, high-rise apartment ministry, yoking of inner-city and suburban parishes, use of non-stipendiary clergy, liturgy authentic to the inner city, and many others.

The national leadership of the Episcopal Church took an early stand in support of the civil rights movement. Through efforts coordinated by Arthur Walmsley, Executive Secretary of the Executive Council's Division of Christian Citizenship, it became a dependable ally of organizations struggling against segregation and institutional racism. Early hopes awakened by the movement, which came to their fruition on Congress' approval of the Civil Rights Act in 1964 and the Voting Rights Act a year later, were, however, frustrated by the racism which proved deeper than good will and cosmetic legislation could erase. Despair and rage swept the cities, exploding into riots in 1966 and later. Urban violence was mirrored on the personal level as the catalogue of assassinations mounted throughout the decade: President John F. Kennedy; Malcolm X; Martin Luther King, Jr.; Robert Kennedy — their personal tragedies symptomatic of the turmoil and despair which were sweeping America.

At the height of the crisis, against the background of burning cities in the summer of 1967, Presiding Bishop John Hines convened a special task force to design a suitable response for the Episcopal Church to what had obviously become an urban crisis. It was introduced at General Convention in Seattle, and provided what Hines called the means "by which this Church can take its place humbly and boldly alongside of, and in support of, the dispossessed and oppressed people of this country for the healing of our national life." That venture was the General Convention Special Program (GCSP), directed by Leon Modeste. Its aims were, in Hines' words,

the bringing of peoples in ghettos into areas of decision-making by which their destiny is influenced. It will encourage the use of political and economic power to support justice and self-determination for all. . . . It will make available skilled personnel assistance, and request the appropriation of substantial sums of money to community organizations involved in the betterment of depressed urban areas, and under the control of those who are largely both black and poor, that their power for self-determination may be increased and their dignity restored.'

The Triennial Meeting of Episcopal Churchwomen again responded with significant funding, reordering its UTO policy to allocate \$3 million to GCSP.

GCSP was again a significant order of business at the Special General Convention held at Notre Dame in 1969; once more, the Church voted to place its support behind the program of empowerment which GCSP represented. However, the strains and tensions between supporters and opponents were heightened.

Some of those who participated in the design of the GCSP now believe that the program would have been strengthened by attention to two aspects of its design.

(1) The learnings from the Joint Urban Program, on which funds had been expended and through which new patterns of ministry and mission had been developed, could have been shared with the whole Church.

(2) Moreover, the GCSP was structured to function apart from the parish and diocesan structures, so that it was primarily a program of the Executive Council, with little or no relationship to the Church on the local level. One Roman Catholic observer present at the 1969 Convention warned that the conversion experienced by the delegates would be impossible to communicate to their constituencies and that a severe backlash would result. He was right.

The Seventies and Beyond

The Sixties ended with a Church divided, reflecting in its own life the deep schisms between black and white Americans, and between those who opposed American involvement in Vietnam and those who continued to support the war effort. Many in the

Church had begun to see the relationships between racial, economic, social, and sexual justice, and the challenges to our institutional life which those demands must make. Others, however, perceiving the cost of change or unconvinced of its necessity, resisted those implications. Responding to curtailed resources and widespread opposition, the 1970 General Convention in Houston drastically limited the GCSP and mandated a cutback of more than 50% in Executive Council staff. The 1973 General Convention in Louisville brought the GCSP to an end.

The Church's engagement with racism, led by Presiding Bishop Hines, was ultimately overshadowed by other concerns: questions of global justice, focussing on the Vietnam War; sexual justice, and especially as it applied to the ordination of women to the presbyterate and episcopate; and the peculiarly internal issue of Prayer Book revision. For several years the Church seemed immobilized by its internal strife. Matters of private and ecclesiastical spirituality seemed more pressing than the unfinished business of achieving justice for all. Exhausted by various struggles which seemed to be endless, despairing and shocked at the scandal which led to the nation's first Presidential resignation and the first pardon required to keep a President out of prison, the Church and the nation seemed to have reached the end of an era.

Nevertheless, the hopes which so stirred the Church a few years earlier survived on the national Church level in the Coalition for Human Needs. Desks with responsibility for ethnic ministry — Black, Asian, Hispanic and Native American — came into being. In spite of the Church's failure to fund them at a level indicative of the urgency of their work, they continue to manifest a commitment to those whose experience of oppression calls for special forms of ministry.

Under the new Presiding Bishop, John Allin, the massive campaign for capital funds known as Venture in Mission began to take shape. The General Convention of 1976 approved the ordination of women and a first reading of the *Book of Common Prayer*. Three years later, the 1979 Convention in Denver formally ratified the new *Prayer Book* and also turned back attempts to curtail resources for the Coalition for Human Needs.

Towards the end of the Seventies, a group of bishops whose dioceses include large metropolitan areas became convinced that the Church must not ignore the continuing misery of the poor, whose situation had not only worsened but was in danger of being evaluated as hopeless by both Church and society. The Urban Bishops Coalition joined with the Church and City Conference in sponsoring a series of hearings in a number of cities to call the Church's attention to the realities of contemporary urban life. Their efforts bore fruit in a new grassroots coalition known as the Episcopal Urban Caucus. Using an annual Assembly as its base, the Caucus undertook to pressure the Episcopal Church towards increasing its attention to poor and oppressed people, and to a wide range of other issues related to our urbanized society: energy, ecology, gentrification, re-industrialization, economic justice, nuclear-related dangers, and the revitalization of urban parishes.

By the end of 1981, the Episcopal Urban Caucus had developed a national network of some 800 persons, held two national Assemblies, developed a structure and been incorporated, and taken its place as a significant force in the Church. Its role placed it in a lengthy tradition of unofficial Church groups which both challenge the Church and also undertake their own programs. Anglicanism in the United States owes its origins to such an unofficial organization, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (SPG), which not only urged the Church of England to remember its mission to the American colonies but sent its own missionaries as well. In more recent times, the Episcopal Society for Cultural and Racial Unity (ESCRU) undertook its own strong and effective witness for racial justice during the 1960's, but also lent its support and urgings to the Church's participation in that movement. In the same way, the Episcopal Urban Caucus is

responsible not only for its own program but is also the source of many of the creative ideas and enterprises now being proposed by the Episcopal Church. This creative ferment is a sign that the Church recognizes that it is time to move ahead with the concerns which call the Church to be a people of justice.

The Joint Commission on the Church in Metropolitan Areas, created after the 1973 General Convention, did not function, and the Commission was reconstituted in 1976. The 1979 Convention made it a Standing Commission, and this is our first report. We believe that the issues which most recently informed the General Convention Special Program still press the Church to action. We believe that it is time to move again to build on the promise of the GCSP and its work on behalf of the poor, even as we sharpen our mission by new insights. In particular, we call the Church to new methods of mission and ministry which will:

- (1) Share its learnings from such patterns with the whole Church, making it possible for effective styles of mission to serve as resources far beyond the original bounds of the enterprise itself; and
- (2) Affirm and be solidly based in the diocesan and especially the parish structure of the Episcopal Church, recognizing that it is the local parish which ought to be the chief vehicle for the Episcopal Church's strategy for mission and ministry.

We offer the proposal which follows as a means to accomplish those goals, mindful of our Lord's insistent command to preach good news to the poor and aware that, unless we do so, we have not fully shared in the ministry to which we are called.

THEOLOGICAL AND BIBLICAL REFLECTIONS

This Commission unanimously believes that the Episcopal Church is called now to turn its attention beyond itself to those who suffer most — the poor and oppressed. We are mindful that it was such people with whom our Lord Jesus Christ chose to walk and with whom he lived and died. It is important to understand that we are guided by biblical and theological principles, and not by philosophies which hold that such concerns belong *only* either to the voluntary, or to the public, sectors of society. We reject all such reasoning because we know that the needs of the poor can never be met by the Churches and other voluntary agencies acting alone, and because it does violence to the theory of government on which our country is based — which affirms that government is not only *of* and *by* the people but also *for* the people. No government which fails to meet the needs of its poorest can be said to be acting justly.

The Incarnation

Christians, however, undertake their mission in response to the words of Jesus. *When the Son of Man comes in his glory and all the angels with him, he will sit in state on his throne with all the nations gathered before him. He will separate the people into two groups, as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. And he will place the sheep on his right hand and the goats on his left. . . . Then he will say to those on his left hand, "The curse is upon you; go from my sight to the eternal fire that is ready for the devil and his angels. For when I was hungry you gave me nothing to eat, when thirsty nothing to drink; when I was a stranger you gave me no home, when naked you did not clothe me; when I was ill and in prison you did not come to my help." And they too will reply, "Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or ill or in prison, and did nothing for you?" And he will answer, "I tell you this: Anything you did not do for one of these, however humble, you did not do for me."*

—Matthew 25:31-33,41-45 NEB

We know who such people are in our time. They are those who are no strangers to hunger, for whom discrimination on account of race, age, gender, place of birth, or lack of credentials is an everyday experience, who suffer perennial unemployment, whose loved ones turn to one drug or another to obscure their despair, who are forced from their homes, who go to prison for want of a good lawyer, whose menial work never lifts them out of poverty, whose children spend twelve years at schools which often leave them without the rudiments of an education.

We believe that in the Church's doctrine of the Incarnation we come face to face with our mission. Christ dwells among the least of our brothers and sisters; Christ dwells *in* the least of our brothers and sisters. Our response to their need is our action to God. Every act of hate directed towards a person of another race is delivered to Christ. Christ suffers the hunger of every starving child, the imprisonment of every victim of unjust punishment. Every weapon of destruction is aimed at Christ himself, the Christ who willingly takes up residence among these people bearing the image of God.

Failing to take seriously the doctrine of the Incarnation distorts our faith. Ignoring the implications for the earth since it has become God's own dwelling place, we mistreat its resources and its fragile balance of life. Forgetting the image of God borne by each member of the human family, we denigrate and overlook them. Misunderstanding the importance which God places on the *human*, and on the human family as the People of God, we view salvation as a private affair. The sacraments, which celebrate God's presence in and through this world, lose their meaning.²

The Biblical View of Poverty

A society may tell us that poverty is a symptom of personal sloth, or "underdevelopment," or even God's will. Similarly, we may be told that wealth is an indication of God's favor, or a reward for righteousness or hard work. These commonly-held prejudices fly in the face of the biblical perspective on wealth and poverty.

Even a casual reading of the scriptures indicates how seriously the biblical writers take poverty. More than 300 references in the Bible refer to oppression; nearly half of those clearly identify poverty as related to oppression. Indeed, in some of the Hebrew texts the meaning overlaps so that the best translation would be "oppressed-poor."³ Consider, for example, the preaching of the prophet Amos.

Thus says the Lord: For the three crimes, the four crimes of Israel I have made my decree and will not relent; because they have sold the virtuous for silver and the poor for a pair of shoes, because they trample on the heads of ordinary people and push the poor out of their path. . . .

—Amos 2:6-7a Jer.

In particular, Amos was offended by those who failed to see the connections between their relationship with a God of justice and the life of their nation.

Listen to this, you who trample on the needy and try to suppress the poor people of the country, you who say, "When will New Moon be over so that we can sell our corn, and sabbath, so that we can market our wheat? Then, by lowering the bushel, raising the shekel, by swindling and tampering with the scales, we can buy up the poor for money, and the needy for a pair of sandals, and get a price even for the sweeping of the wheat.

—Amos 8:4-5 Jer.

Let me have no more of the din of your chanting, no more of your strumming on harps. But let justice flow like water, and integrity like an unfailing stream.

—Amos 5:23-24 Jer.

That vision of justice which makes the well-being of the poor the ultimate criterion for fulfilling God's demands informs the vision of the prophets and is a recurring theme in the Psalms, the hymns of Israel. They insisted that God's will is not done until the whole community enjoys the well-being which is God's intention: the condition of *shalom*, which is usually translated *peace* but is in fact not only the absence of war and violence but the state which prevails when God's will is done. There is food, drink, and feasting for all; no one's plenty is at the expense of another's need, no life unnaturally cut short; the desert blooms and nature is in harmony (the lion and the lamb lie down together); and all enjoy the dignity of well-being which are theirs by right because they bear the image of God.

It was that vision of *shalom* which Jesus took as his own and which he claimed had come to fruition in him.

He came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and went into the synagogue on the sabbath day as he usually did. He stood up to read, and they handed him the scroll of the prophet Isaiah. Unrolling the scroll he found the place where it is written:

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, for He has anointed me. He has sent me to bring good news to the poor, to proclaim liberty to captives, new sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

He rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the assistant and sat down. All eyes in the synagogue were fixed on him. Then he began to speak to them: "Today this text has been fulfilled in your hearing."

—Luke 4:16-21 Jer.

Isaiah's text summarized Jesus' own mission, and described what he cared most about. But more than setting his priorities, Isaiah's text *came true* in Jesus. In claiming that its promise was fulfilled in him, Jesus was proclaiming "the year of the Lord's favor" — the ancient custom described in the Book of Leviticus that decreed every seventh year as a year of rest and every fiftieth year a year of jubilee. The year of jubilee meant that servants must be set free and property returned to those from whom it had been bought or taken. The year of jubilee is the year of the Lord's favor, a holy time when oppression and degradation are ended in accordance with God's will. It is a time of starting over, when relationships of power and slavery come to an end and people are restored to equality and freedom.

We believe that this proclamation of *shalom* and jubilee — of peace with justice for poor and forgotten people — calls the Episcopal Church to be agents of that *shalom*. Certainly we are called to minister to the immediate suffering which afflicts the victims of society whom we see all around us: distribution of food, medical care, shelter, and other immediate and primary needs.

But we also know that such ministries are not enough, because they do not address the *injustice* which causes the pain in the first place. The People of God share a mission to *change whatever causes the oppression*. We do so because we know that God cares not only about the suffering but about that which causes the suffering. Of course we take on the role of the Good Samaritan, because we cannot ignore human need. But to stop at that point leaves untouched the institutions and values and structures which cause the misery, and places us in the positions of leaving them in control, unless our gestures of generosity are accompanied by actions to end the oppression. To do so will, of course, place the Church in conflict with the principalities and powers of our time, and with many of our own members who do not share our understanding of God's demand for justice. But such conflict can be creative, if it helps us all to understand more deeply the mission to which God is calling us.

Former Presiding Bishop Arthur Lichtenberger reminded his last General Convention in 1964, "The most distant places in the consciousness of most of us are the slums and ghettos in our own cities. We must consider them as mission frontiers every bit as compelling as the most remote place geographically on the face of the earth. There is no longer a distinction between foreign and domestic mission. It is all one."⁴ Our own Presiding Bishop John Allin reminded us that the same call still challenges us: "Since the beginning of our communal life together as followers of Christ, Christians have been willing to trust one another and to work together for the support of Christian mission in distant places and for the proclamation of the Gospel, particularly to those with special needs."⁵

THE JUBILEE MINISTRY

This Commission believes that each Christian is called to a life of faith in which our relationship with God shapes, and is shaped by, our life in the world. The tension between spirituality and social action, which so occupied the last two decades of our Church's life, need not and should not exist. Piety divorced from the implications of the Incarnation lends itself to an other-worldly and ultimately non-Christian detachment from the arena in which God was pleased to dwell. Action which claims to be based on God's will, but which does not seek the deepening of reflection, communion, and discernment by which our bond with God is nurtured, can become erratic and shallow. What is needed is a Christian community in which the drama of the streets and the inner silence in which God speaks are bound together. The urban parish can be such a community of faith and action, providing the resources by which Christian people are empowered and emboldened to struggle with the world for the world.

In such a context, Paul's image of the Body of Christ with many limbs and organs takes on new meaning. Each parish is called to be such a part of Christ's Body, each with its own "personality" and gifts, manifesting God's presence for some useful purpose in the building of *shalom*.

Each parish or congregation in metropolis is called to such a vocation. It might well seek out its own unique gifts which it brings to ministry in the setting in which it is rooted, as well as the special needs of God's people who surround it. If each metropolitan parish undertook such reflection, in communication with other similarly-based congregations, a wholistic urban ministry would emerge: a diocesan "urban strategy" which takes seriously God-given gifts and opportunities, and is rooted in the local congregation as its focus and base. The same process among the metropolitan dioceses of the Church would create a new and dynamic national mission strategy. What we propose for the Episcopal Church is based on this kind of mission.

The promise of *shalom* was the theme of the prophets and the vision for which Jesus suffered and died. St. Paul tells us that in Christ, a new creation of *shalom* is breaking in, challenging the violence, injustice, and death which prevail throughout the world. The Christian community is called to live not by the values and powers of the old order but in the *new* creation, in which the former structures of oppression and inequality no longer count. In other words, every gathering of Christians is meant to mirror in its own life the peace and justice of the City of God, and to take on the responsibility of building the foretaste of that City all around it. Parishes have the vocation, and the joyous opportunity, to reflect and build human community in accordance with the vision they have glimpsed of God's will for humankind.

This Standing Commission proposes to the General Convention of the Episcopal

Church that it make a major new commitment to a ministry of joint discipleship with poor and oppressed people, in the United States and abroad, to meet basic human needs and to build a just and peaceful global society. It is proposed that the new ministry commitment be called:

THE JUBILEE MINISTRY

The Jubilee Ministry will be a celebrative ministry, based on our belief that by affirming the biblical priorities of God — in partnership with the poor, the powerless, the vulnerable — we discover our own humanity in Christ, our own freedom. It will be a celebration of the Way of Jesus, a celebration that we live, not by the old order which is passing away, but by the New Creation, lighted by the vision of the City of God. The Jubilee Ministry will be a continuing celebration of the Christ who reigns by taking his place among the lowliest, who rules by emptying himself of all power but the power of love, whose majesty was revealed in sharing our humanity in order to set human beings free, whose strength is weakness in the world's eyes.

The Jubilee Ministry draws no distinctions between “domestic” and “overseas” or “world” mission, or between rural, suburban, or urban mission. We believe Presiding Bishop Lichtenberger was right. Those distinctions no longer matter on a small planet which has become one neighborhood. The new ministry will engage the needs and issues of poverty and oppression wherever parishes are willing to become involved in those needs and issues. And the Jubilee Ministry will affirm the work of the Coalition for Human Needs and take its place alongside the Coalition.

The Executive Council is charged to implement the following functions of the Jubilee Ministry.

Jubilee Ministry Functions

1. Consciousness Raising.

To challenge and confront the members of the Episcopal Church to understand the facts of poverty and injustice, leading them to an active role in meeting the needs of poor and oppressed people and in the struggle against the causes of such suffering.

2. Designated Jubilee Centers.

To locate and affirm as Jubilee Centers those parishes and other Church-related groupings which already are directly involved with poor and oppressed people.

Such Centers will offer their own commitment to make their experience available to others who seek models for ministry to poor people. Their experience will be studied and communicated, their leaders will have opportunity to work in consultation and evaluation of other ministries, and they will become training sites. The Jubilee Ministry Program will seek to avoid the necessity of beginning such work, whenever possible, preferring to affirm already existing parish-based programs.

We believe that designation as a Jubilee Center will be a sought-for honor. The Jubilee Ministry Advisory Committee will develop and approve a form for applications, and evaluations will be performed through on-site visits by at least two persons presently engaged in such ministry.

3. Training.

For the specific skills and sensitivities required for the Jubilee Ministry. Since such training is rare and difficult to obtain, the Jubilee Ministry will develop regional training programs in the following categories:

- Academic-year field training for seminarians;
- Summer work programs for seminarians and college students;

- Church-related field placements for graduate students in relevant fields such as social work, community organization, therapy, medicine, and sociology;
- Sabbaticals for parish clergy and seminary faculty;
- Internships for laity, clergy, and retirees.

4. Human Resources Bank.

To identify persons with gifts helpful in such ministry (including retired persons), establish a retrieval system, and match personnel with parishes applying for assistance.

5. Research and Evaluation.

To select particular Jubilee Ministries with significant potential as models, and to communicate their work to the whole Church. Specialized church research organizations will be retained to develop, analyze, and disseminate data, and to work with congregations as consultants when necessary.

6. Publications.

To publish a quarterly magazine reporting on the issues which affect poor and oppressed people, public policy, and church policy — as they pertain to those issues, theological reflection, and the local manifestations of the Jubilee Ministry. The quarterly will be published at a nominal subscription price, and subsidized in order to make its findings widely available. The Jubilee Ministry will also publish occasional papers and books on related concerns.

7. Evangelism and Congregational Development.

To seek more effective ways of urban evangelism, especially formation of non-white congregations.

8. Network for Public Policy.

To cooperate closely with the Episcopal Urban Caucus to develop an active network which can respond quickly as an advocate on public issues which affect the lives and futures of poor people.

9. Jubilee Ministry Grants.

A component for awarding of grants is essential for the functions identified in sections 1 through 8. All grants will be made by the Jubilee Ministry Board and approved by the Executive Council to dioceses, congregations, or local Church organizations for specified ministries and mission.

Every such grant must be made to a diocese, congregation, or organization of the Episcopal Church with the prior approval of the bishop, rector or other clergy in charge, and of the vestry or other responsible lay body.

Each such grant shall have, as its clearly stated purpose, mission and/or ministry directed beyond the recipient unit to meet needs or address issues affecting poor and oppressed people and in which such people participate in the decision-making.

Each grant shall require a minimum matching grant of at least 25% to be provided at the local level, which may be contributions in kind through donated building usage and local staff and volunteer time.

No grant is to be used for building or maintenance, although expenses for alterations or purchase of equipment will be permitted. The Jubilee Ministry will, however, provide consultation and advocacy services to grant recipients in seeking alternative funding sources for such purposes.

All grants will be designed on a devolving scale not to exceed five years of funding, according to a schedule submitted with the application or with notification of approval, and will be audited and evaluated annually. Evaluation in terms of stated purpose and objectives for funded ministries will be undertaken by persons not directly involved in the program but with skills and experience in similar or related areas of mission and

ministry, and grants will be subject to reduction or termination on the basis of such evaluations.

Programs will be funded with the understanding that they will serve as models for the whole Church, and personnel are expected to cooperate with those involved in research and evaluation. The results of such research will be communicated in ways which will maximize the replication of such programs in other settings.

All grant applications must include plans for funding beyond expiration of the Jubilee Ministry Grant.

References

- ¹ The Rt. Rev. John Hines, quoted in *Church and Society in Crisis: Social Policy of the Episcopal Church 1964-1967* (New York: The Executive Council, 1967), pp. 6-7.
- ² See the Rev. Kenneth Leech, "Believing in the Incarnation and Its Social Consequences" (London: St. Matthew's Church, Hereford Street, 1976).
- ³ The Rev. Thomas Hanks, Professor of Old Testament Seminario Biblico Latinoamericano, San Jose, Costa Rica, "Why People Are Poor," *Sojourners* (January 1981).
- ⁴ The Rt. Rev. Arthur Lichtenberger, quoted in *Journal of the General Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church*, 1964.
- ⁵ The Rt. Rev. John M. Allin, General Church Program: "Mission Eighty-One," 1980.

Resolution #A-80.

The Jubilee Ministry.

Whereas, the Year of Jubilee decreed by God (*Leviticus 25*) demands a time of new beginnings, when relationships of power and servitude come to an end and all members of the society are restored to equality and freedom; and

Whereas, in his life, death and resurrection Jesus proclaimed a new beginning of the Reign of God in him; and

Whereas, the Scriptures defined God's Reign as a society of *shalom*, of peace and justice for all people; and

Whereas, Jesus defined his mission to be "to bring good news to the poor, to proclaim liberty to captives, new sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free" (*Luke 4:18-19*); and

Whereas, Jesus identified so completely with poor and oppressed people that he told his followers that to meet or fail to meet the needs of the hungry, the stranger, the one without clothing, the sick, or the prisoner is to serve or not serve Jesus himself (*Matthew 25*); and

Whereas, the mission of the Church in this and every age is to embody faithfully the mission of Jesus Christ in the Time of Jubilee, the New Creation of Shalom; therefore, be it

Resolved, the House of _____ concurring, That the Sixty-Seventh General Convention affirms that a ministry of joint discipleship in Christ with poor and oppressed people, to meet basic human needs and to build a just society, is the mission of the Church; and be it further

Resolved, the House of _____ concurring, That the Executive Council is directed to implement the following functions of a priority ministry commitment by this Church to be called "The Jubilee Ministry":

1. Consciousness Raising. To challenge and confront the members of the Episcopal Church and other churches, through conferences, seminars, study materials, Christian education programs, and this Church's seminaries, to understand the facts of poverty and

injustice, encouraging them to take an active role in meeting the needs of poor and oppressed people and in the struggle against the causes of such suffering.

2. *Designated Jubilee Centers.* Through a distinct commission of the Coalition for Human Needs to locate and affirm as Jubilee Centers those congregations, including ecumenical clusters, already directly engaged in mission and ministry among and with poor people, so that their experience can be studied and the learnings used by other parishes to become Jubilee Centers.

3. *Training.* For leadership of, and involvement in, Jubilee Ministry, through academic-year field training for clergy and seminaries, summer work programs for younger people, seminars and classes for clergy and lay volunteers, including poor and oppressed people and indigenous leaders, sabbaticals, shared work time between parishes in partnership, and utilization of retirees.

4. *Human Resources Bank.* To identify persons with gifts and skills helpful in Jubilee Ministry, establish a retrieval system, and match personnel with Jubilee Center needs.

5. *Research and Evaluation.* To select particular Jubilee Ministries with significant potential as models, and to communicate their work and methodology to the whole Church.

6. *Publications.* To publish a quarterly journal at a nominal price to report on issues which affect the poor, public and church policy related to those issues, theological reflection, and local models of Jubilee Ministry, as well as occasional papers and books on related concerns.

7. *Network for Public Policy.* To cooperate closely with the Episcopal Urban Caucus in developing an active network able to respond quickly and significantly on public issues of peace and justice.

8. *Evangelism and Congregational Development.* To seek and implement more effectively ways of urban evangelism, especially in the formation of non-caucasian congregations.

9. *Jubilee Ministry Grants.* To be made by the Coalition for Human Needs commissions through the Executive Council, in accordance with the procedures and guidelines in the report of the Standing Commission on the Church in Metropolitan Areas, representing, in sum, a concrete expression of the priority commitment made by this Church in the foregoing resolution.

Resolution #A—81.

Funding for Jubilee Ministry.

Resolved, the House of _____ concurring, That funds be allocated during the next triennium for each of the functions of the Jubilee Ministry as follows:

	1983	1984	1985
1. Consciousness raising	\$ 95,000	\$ 75,000	\$ 70,000
2. Jubilee ministry grants	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000
3. Jubilee centers	110,000	140,000	160,000
4. Training	250,000	250,000	250,000
5. Human Resources Bank	50,000	50,000	50,000
6. Research and evaluation	45,000	50,000	50,000
7. Publications	100,000	115,000	130,000
8. Evangelism and congregational development	100,000	100,000	100,000
9. Administration	250,000	270,000	280,000
Total funding	<u>\$2,000,000</u>	<u>\$2,050,000</u>	<u>\$2,090,000</u>

And be it further

Resolved, the House of _____ concurring, That the funds for the Jubilee Ministry be obtained by increasing the income side of the program budget.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Income	1980	1981	1982
Appropriated by Convention	\$9,150	\$11,150	\$4,100.00
Expense			
Meetings	5,165	7,807	2,045.32*
Consultant (request pending at time of report)			300.00

*As of 2-28-82

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Our goals and objectives and accompanying budgetary requests for the next triennium are as follows: The Commission's overall goal is to develop recommendations and strategies which will be of concrete assistance to the Church in metropolitan areas in shaping new patterns of mission and ministry.

1983 Goal

Advise and monitor the establishment of the Jubilee Ministry.

Objective

The Commission will offer guidance to the Executive Council and the Coalition for Human Needs in the establishment of the Jubilee Ministry and will monitor and evaluate its progress.

Budget

Administrative expense	\$ 400.00
Two meetings of Commission	
(Travel—\$4,200 per meeting; per diem—\$2,000 per meeting)	12,400.00
One meeting of Executive Committee	
(Travel—\$1,100; per diem—\$300)	<u>1,400.00</u>
TOTAL	\$14,200.00

1984 Goal

Assist in establishment of Jubilee Ministry Centers.

Objective

The Commission will meet with the Coalition for Human Needs, the Episcopal Urban Caucus, other urban concerned groups, those committees and staff of the Executive Council concerned with ministry to poor and oppressed people and various other groups in the Church who share this goal for Christian mission, to assist in the process of identification of Jubilee Centers for ministry and training and to continue to monitor the various functions of the Jubilee Ministry.

THE BLUE BOOK

Budget

Two meeting of Commission (Travel—\$4,200 per meeting; per diem—\$2,000 per meeting)	\$12,400
Two meetings of a subcommittee (Travel—\$1,100; per diem—\$300)	<u>2,800</u>
TOTAL	\$15,200

1985 Goal

To evaluate the Jubilee Ministry and to recommend to the 1985 General Convention new strategies and models for the mission of the Church in urban and deprived areas.

Objective

The Commission will meet with the Executive Council, the Church Center staff, the Board of the Episcopal Urban Caucus, and other church groups concerned with ministry to poor and oppressed people, including our seminaries, to evaluate the progress and effectiveness of the Jubilee Ministry and to propose new models and strategies for continuing and expanding this priority ministry of the Church.

Budget

One meeting of Commission (Travel—\$4,200 per meeting; per diem—\$2,000 per meeting)	\$6,200
Two meetings of Executive Committee (Travel—\$1,100 per meeting; per diem—\$300 per meeting)	<u>2,800</u>
TOTAL	\$9,000

Resolution #A—82.

Budget request.

Resolved, the House of _____ concurring, That there be appropriated from the Expense Budget of the General Convention the sum of \$38,400 for the triennium 1983-85 for the expenses of the Standing Commission on the Church in Metropolitan Areas.