

The Standing Commission on Stewardship and Development

INTRODUCTION

The Standing Commission on Stewardship and Development (hereafter identified as the Commission) is now six years old, and this is its second report to the General Convention. Membership of the Commission is as follows:

The Rt. Rev. Gerald N. McAllister, <i>Chairman</i>	Prov. 7-Oklahoma
The Rt. Rev. Charles Brinkley Morton	Prov. 8-San Diego
The Rev. Dr. Robert R. Parks	Prov. 2-New York
The Rev. Dr. Roy Strasburger	Prov. 8-El Camino Real
Mrs. Ann Burr	Prov. 4-Atlanta
Mr. Harry W. Havemeyer (<i>Executive Council liaison</i>)	Prov. 2-New York
Ms. Iris Harris-Garvey	Prov. 3-Washington
Ms. Sally T. Head	Prov. 5-Michigan
Mr. William Ikard, <i>Vice-Chairman</i>	Prov. 7-Rio Grande
Mrs. Brenda J. Richer, <i>Secretary</i>	Prov. 6-Montana
Mr. Frank Troutman, Jr.	Prov. 4-Georgia
Mr. Richard W. Wheeler	Prov. 2-New York

The work of the Commission has been funded by a budget of \$50,750 for the triennium. An account of our expenditures is included at the end of this report.

OUR CHARGE

We have found it helpful to constantly keep our charge from the 66th General Convention, which called us into being, before us. We have consistently used our charge to organize our work. It is also the outline we shall use to give an accounting of that work:

1. *To hold up before the Church the responsibility of faithful stewardship.*

There is a sense in which all the work of the Commission is simply a particular expression of this overarching purpose, ways in which we live out this charge and seek its implementation.

We would like to trace some exceedingly important developments in the recent stewardship history of the Episcopal Church, and we do this to provide both a background and a context for our present labors. We also are convinced that every move which has been made to enhance the stewardship capability of this Church (and those moves are very modest) has resulted in a rich harvest and a more missionary and servant Church. We need to remind ourselves that the total staff for Stewardship and Development of our Church Center, who serve the whole Church, is much smaller than the Development Office of many medium sized colleges and universities. We share this not to plead for bigness but to rejoice that in a brief time we have received such a bountiful harvest from the seed sown. The glory is God's that the Episcopal Church has moved from 8th place in 1974 in the per capita giving among the ten largest denominations tracked by the NCCC to first place in 1983. Many things have been used by God to accomplish this dramatic move. The most significant has been the recovery of our missionary vocation through Venture in Mission. VIM proved two things: The first is that, when we are

serious about the gospel imperative and sound a clear call, the Church will respond; the second is that the financial response-ability of the Church is far beyond what we have dared to dream or had the courage to ask for until now.

The ongoing stewardship education efforts through the Church have had their impact, and their influence is cumulative and growing. In obedience to the resolution of the last General Convention, the Commission and the staff of the Office of Stewardship have successfully concentrated on the creation and strengthening of the diocesan stewardship structure in the past triennium. The tithing resolution proposed by the Commission and adopted by the last General Convention contributed to a year-to-year (1982-1983) increase in giving by Episcopalians which was almost double that of the other Churches in the NCCC study. Even as we give thanks for the Spirit's growing empowerment of us for mission, we are humbled by the fact that Episcopalians only give 1.9% of their gross income to the Church. It is obvious that the theme, "Strive to Tithe," which has been adopted in many parts of the Church, is one we will not quickly outgrow. It is equally obvious that, when bishops and diocesan stewardship commissions have adopted the tithe, it has resulted in renewal and increased evangelism. The same truth is evident at the congregational level when clergy and vestry adopt the tithe. Without such leadership the record is discouraging. God is not mocked. Sowing and reaping are cause and effect in stewardship as in all of life.

2. *To recommend a strategy for stewardship education throughout the Church.*

In this triennium, the fruit of the labor of the Episcopal Church has appeared in remarkable abundance. Especially in regard to the development of stewardship commissions, education programs as well as planned giving committees and programs, the Episcopal Church has virtually skyrocketed in its progress. The support for this movement has been churchwide. To be noted as important is the expansion of the work of the Office of Stewardship staff, the stewardship commissions of the dioceses and, of course, the many dedicated clergy and lay leaders who have persisted and sustained their personal commitment to stewardship as the main work of the Church. The best is yet to be and the next three trienniums will witness the further awakening of our Church in its dioceses, congregations, and individuals to the potential for mission and ministry. The following facts from the Office of Stewardship Development give some evidence as to how the progress has been supported:

- Stewardship Development. With the exception of twelve dioceses, the whole Episcopal Church has been visited by the staff of the Office of Stewardship Development. The great majority of the dioceses (75%) have stewardship commissions and are moving toward year-round programming.
- In the last three years, fifteen regional conferences for stewardship leadership have been held, with a total attendance of approximately 250 participants.
- There have been thirteen stewardship practicums for clergy, with a total attendance of approximately 400 different clergy in the United States, Mexico, Central America, and Southeast Asia.
- Twelve issues of *Stewardship Reports* have been received by 17,000 readers in the last three years.
- Four Stewardship Resource Catalogues have been printed and distributed, presenting approximately 60 new resource pieces for use in congregations. Some of these are available in the Spanish language.

- Venture in Mission has been the most successful mission fund development program in the history of North American Christianity. Campaigns have been completed by 89% of the dioceses for a total pledged amount of \$168,101,964.

While we rejoice in the very real accomplishments listed above, which were achieved in the past triennium, we are conscious of a long road ahead. There are two foci for the ongoing work of the Commissions' educational task. There are still only a small number of our communicants whose understanding of stewardship extends beyond the use they make of their money. The magnificent biblical symbol of the *steward* has gone through centuries of reductionism, until today it equates in the minds of many with "my pledge or tithing," or for a few, "the use I make of all my material resources." We have much to do if we are to enable the Church to recover the biblical understanding which begins with, "the earth is the Lord's and all that therein is." The steward is one who recognizes that sovereignty, and lives accordingly. The question with which the symbol of the steward confronts us is not, "What are we doing with a few dollars of our income?" but rather, "What are we doing with our lives?" An adequate theology of stewardship would both enable and require us to view the ecological concerns of this abused planet named Earth as part of our stewardship. It would sensitize us to the truth that we are stewards of community—that community which is a given for every individual and apart from which there is no life.

The quality of any community is determined by whether we exploit it or, by serving it, add to the richness and compassion of its fabric. A vital and biblical theology of stewardship will see and practice economics as an expression of stewardship. It will order personal and corporate priorities by stewardship principles. It will understand war to be the final negation of good stewardship, and it will be conscious that God's gifts are also spiritual in nature, that we are responsible for whether these gifts are used for the nurturing and upbuilding of the household of faith.

Are we being good stewards of the mysteries of God—mysteries which encompass the Gospel together with the sacramental life and acts of the community which also convey the saving action the Gospel proclaims and effects? Do we know that we are the eucharistic community, born in thanksgiving and accountable to a Judge and Friend for our stewardship of each other? It is a theology with these kinds of dimensions which must be embodied in our educational thrust. Two books that meet this test are John H. Westerhoff III's *Building God's People*, written in response to a request from the Rev. Dr. Thomas H. Carson, Jr. and supported by the Commission. The second is *The Steward—A Biblical Symbol Come of Age* by Douglas John Hall, published by Friendship Press for the Commission on Stewardship of the NCCC, USA. We hope to be able to commission other books and studies in fulfillment of our educational mandate.

The second educational focus is "like unto the first." There is no benefit to be gained from having an adequate theology of stewardship until it can be shared with the Church. That sharing needs to take place on a year-round basis; it needs to reach the person in the pew and not just those involved in stewardship programs. The primary responsibility for this must rest in each congregation and be supported by the stewardship committee in each diocese. The Commission feels that it has the obligation to see that excellent quality materials to undergird a year-round educational program in every congregation are produced, promoted, and continually available. One such tool would be a monthly bulletin or newsletter insert which could be inexpensively produced for widespread use throughout the Church.

There are those who point out that "Stewardship is caught and not taught." They remind us that the life of the steward begins with commitment to God, and we are

grateful for the reminder. We are also aware that the most likely setting for the catching to take place is the one in which the teaching and living out of stewardship have been going on. Christian nurture leads to conversion. A soundly conceived stewardship education program will help to raise up a giving, serving, evangelical Church.

3. *To plan and recommend a program of long-range development. . . .*

The Commission has approached this task in two ways. The first has been through the Planned Giving Program, which has focused on a special ministry: the provision of a needed service of financial planning at the level of the individual congregation and diocese. During the last several years, this has been the most rapidly growing part of our stewardship development. It began with three pilot diocese projects and very little in the way of resources to back up a planned giving program. This small resource base has flowered into a complete packet of materials to start and maintain such a program, together with a well-done *Handbook for Planned Giving*, now available to congregations. Since the beginning with the three pilot dioceses, 29 diocesan workshops have been held, 30 dioceses are known to have planned-giving programs, and \$6,000,000 has been identified as gifts that will benefit the Church in the four dioceses that now have full-time planned giving officers. Also, \$170,000 was invested during 1984 in the newly established Pooled Income Fund, which is administered at the Episcopal Church Center at no cost to the participants.

The second response of the Commission has been to turn its attention to the need to continuously develop resources and raise extra-budgetary support for the mission of the Episcopal Church. This concern led us to perceive the necessity of having a long-range plan for our mission. This in turn revealed that the Episcopal Church does not have an existing group in its organizational structure that does long-range strategic planning. A major concern during this triennium has been to develop just such a proposal for presentation to the Executive Council. We discovered toward the end of our labors that our proposal would also enable the Executive Council to develop the capability of "applying the principles of strategic long-range planning to the ministry and mission of the Church." This was a mandate laid upon the Executive Council by Resolution C-8 of the 1979 General Convention.

The Commission has stayed in close communication with the Stewardship Committee of the Executive Council; we have invited their suggestions and criticisms of our proposal. The chairman of the Commission was granted an adequate block of time to present the plan at the October 1984 Executive Council meeting. The Commission requested the Executive Council to study the proposal and to postpone action until their February 1985 meeting. The following is the action which was taken at the February meeting:

"Resolved, That the Executive Council hereby establish, effective January 1, 1986, a mission planning group, chaired by the Presiding Bishop, or his designee, and composed of up to 12 members drawn from the following

- a. Up to two members of the Executive Council to be chosen by the Council;
- b. The chairperson, or his/her designee, of the Standing Commissions on World Mission, Church in Metropolitan Areas, Church in Small Communities, Human Affairs and Health, and Stewardship and Development;
- c. The Secretary General of the Anglican-Consultative Council, or his or her designee;
- d. Up to four members-at-large, to be appointed by the Presiding Bishop from the Church

for the purposes of advising the Council on long-range strategic mission planning; such group to be furnished staff support from the Stewardship/Development Office of the Council; and be it further

Resolved, That a resource development group be appointed by the Presiding Bishop, constituted as follows

1. One or 2 members of the Executive Council;
2. One member of the Standing Commission on Stewardship;
3. Three members with specific talents and experience in this work

for the purposes of planning strategy for the continuous development of resources and of raising extra-budgetary support for the mission of the Church;

(NOTE: Staffing for this group has been approved in the 1985 budget of the Stewardship Unit)

and be it further

Resolved, That an amount shall be considered for inclusion in the Council's 1986 Program Development Budget to defray the costs of operation of the mission planning group, and the resource development group."

The tri-part resolution was unanimously adopted by the Executive Council.

4. To recommend a joint strategy for the various Church agencies in their fund-raising efforts. . . .

Prior to this triennium, the only response the Commission had made to this part of its charge was to work closely with the Board for Theological Education in determining how to best set Resolution B-127 (1% of church income to go for the support of the accredited seminaries) in the strongest stewardship terms. We also lent our support to BTE in shepherding B-127 successfully through the 67th General Convention.

The Commission took the first step in moving toward the development of a joint strategy in 1984. Representatives of the seminaries, colleges, the Presiding Bishop's Fund, the Episcopal Church Foundation, and all other Episcopal agencies were invited to an initial meeting at Trinity Church in New York City. The purpose was to explore the readiness of these agencies to seek together a joint fund-raising strategy. The Presiding Bishop opened the meeting. The morning program, conducted by several top professionals in the field of direct mail campaigns reviewing appropriate applications of technology to fund-raising, was well received. Following lunch, the afternoon was given to information sharing. The Commission was delighted to learn that almost without exception the agencies were much more interested in cooperative efforts than they were in asserting or protecting a pattern of total independence in their fund-raising efforts. The meeting concluded with a motion, unanimously adopted, requesting Bishop McAllister to appoint a steering committee from members of the Commission and the agencies to continue the exploration of how to move toward a joint fund-raising strategy. The Rev. Dr. Roy Strasburger, a Commission member, chairs this Steering Committee.

This Steering Committee met in New York City immediately prior to the March 1985 meeting of the Commission. Steering Committee members are executives or development officers representing these agencies and institutions: The Episcopal Church Foundation, the Association of Episcopal Colleges, Washington Cathedral, the Episcopal Society for Ministry to Aging (ESMA), the Episcopal Radio and TV Foundation, and the General Theological Seminary. There was an obvious spirit of cooperation and common purpose as the representatives gathered, shared, and planned. At the present time, the Committee plans an annual conference for sharing, coordination, and learning. These conferences will receive widest publicity throughout the Church, and the Com-

STEWARDSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT

mission and national Stewardship Office will continue strong support and encouragement. There are many exciting possibilities which will enhance the fund-raising capabilities of these schools and agencies, as well as reduce their costs by eliminating duplicate efforts.

5. To consider all national fund-raising proposals for its recommendations. . . .

There have been no national fund-raising proposals for the Commission to consider.

GOALS FOR 1986-1988

During the next triennium the Commission will:

1. Try to encourage the acceptance by congregations and dioceses of the principle of spending as much on others as on ourselves.
2. Attempt to increase the resources available for year-round stewardship education, with particular emphasis upon a monthly pamphlet which could be used as a bulletin insert or mailed with a parish newsletter.
3. Continue to encourage cooperation between the agencies of the Church in their education programs and fund raising.
4. Strive to improve all aspects of our stewardship data base to both deepen our understanding of where we are and improve our effectiveness in future development work.
5. Continue our efforts to heighten the awareness of our seminaries to their need to broaden and deepen their teaching of stewardship through their regular curricula.
6. Plan to be a resource for the newly established Mission Planning Group and the Resource Development Group of the Executive Council.
7. Address the critical concern that 41% of Episcopal families/individuals do not pledge.
8. Continue the task of getting a stewardship committee in every diocese and overseas jurisdiction.
9. Help to hold up the stewardship principle of accountability and to assist the Church to grow in her willingness and ability to evaluate her ministries (baptized and ordered), programs and institutions.

RESOLUTIONS

Resolution #A—147

Resolved, the House of _____ concurring, That this 68th General Convention directs the Program, Budget, and Finance Committee to prepare and submit a unified Budget for the Episcopal Church to the 69th General Convention.

EXPLANATION: Eighty-two of the one hundred domestic dioceses are funded by a unified budget. During this past triennium, the Office of the Treasurer of the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society has assumed responsibility for both budgets, rather than having separate treasurers. It would seem appropriate to bring our national practice into line with the norm for the Church. The separate budgets are difficult for people to understand. A unified Budget also commends itself as an embodiment of sound accounting and stewardship principles.

Resolution #A—148

Resolved, the House of _____ concurring, That this 68th General Convention directs the Standing Commission on Stewardship and Development to study the matter of funding the national Church program, with special emphasis given to voluntary percentage giving, and to report its findings/recommendations to the 69th General Convention; and be it further

Resolved, That the Presidents of both Houses be authorized to appoint persons from the Program, Budget, and Finance Committee to engage in this study with the Standing Commission on Stewardship and Development.

EXPLANATION: Twenty-four dioceses are on a totally voluntary system, with no asking. Twenty-two are voluntary, with either suggested goals, a fair share figure, or a minimum asking. A voluntary system was approved by the House of Deputies at a previous Convention, but defeated by the House of Bishops. A study is indicated, because there is now enough of a history of voluntary giving in a wide spectrum of dioceses to enable us to make a more authoritative assessment of its effects on stewardship. Many of the dioceses using a voluntary system are hopeful that their system will ultimately be adopted by the national Church, thus allowing them to pursue a consistent teaching and practice in their stewardship.

Resolution #A—149

Resolved, the House of _____ concurring, That each diocese be encouraged to establish a subcommittee of its diocesan Stewardship Committee to educate and encourage local congregations in planned giving.

EXPLANATION: The faithful stewardship of accumulated assets has been mandated by the Church: "The minister of the Congregation is directed to instruct the people, from time to time, about the duty of Christian parents to make prudent provisions for the well-being of their families, and of all persons to make wills, while they are in health, arranging for the disposal of their temporal goods, not neglecting, if they are able, to leave bequests for religious and charitable uses." (1979 *Book of Common Prayer*, page 445). This resolution provides an orderly and responsible way to fulfill this directive.

Resolution #A—150

Resolved, the House of _____ concurring, That the sum of \$64,700 be appropriated for the work of the Standing Commission on Stewardship and Development during the next triennium.

FINANCIAL REPORT, 1983-1985

Total budget: \$44,500

	1983	1984	1985
Expenses			
Travel	\$10,033.35	\$11,937.99	\$ 5,879.23
Housing and meals	2,875.60	3,507.78	2,260.30
Office expense and misc.	16.14	70.87	

STEWARDSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT

Subcommittee meetings	623.35	1,473.50	
Estimated additional expense through 12/31/85			4,810.47
Totals	<u>\$13,548.44</u>	<u>\$16,990.14</u>	<u>\$12,950.00</u>

SUGGESTED TRIENNIAL BUDGET, 1986-1988

1986	Travel	\$16,500
	Housing and food	4,000
	Subcommittee meetings	2,000
	Secretarial	250
	Miscellaneous	250
		<u>\$23,000</u>
1987	Travel	\$17,500
	Housing and food	4,500
	Subcommittee meetings	2,000
	Secretarial	250
	Miscellaneous	250
		<u>\$24,500</u>
1988	Travel	\$12,000
	Housing and food	2,700
	Subcommittee meetings	2,000
	Secretarial	250
	Miscellaneous	250
		<u>\$17,200</u>

Total, 1986-1988 \$64,700.00

Respectfully submitted,

The Rt. Rev. Gerald N. McAllister,
Chairman