

Section C

Action Items

RESOLUTIONS

Resolution 1.

Resolution to Help Those Affected by the Criminal Justice System

Whereas with one in 104 American adults currently incarcerated and one in 28 Pennsylvanians under criminal justice system control, the odds are EVERY congregation has members impacted by crime and the criminal justice system, whether as crime victims, offenders or families; and

Whereas returning citizens often face barriers to employment opportunities, education, housing, public benefits, and other supports needed to boost rates of successful re-entry into community and reduce recidivism; and

Whereas *Healing Communities* is a proven, national model, developed by the Annie E. Casey Foundation with faith leaders from across the theological spectrum to engage congregations in restoration and healing of their own members who have been impacted by crime and the criminal justice system; and

Whereas the *Healing Communities* model equips congregations to become “Stations of Hope” by providing training and support in building relationships of healing, redemption, and reconciliation with individuals and families impacted by the criminal justice system, be it

Resolved that the Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh explore ways that it can work to disrupt the high rates of incarceration and recidivism by exploring the roots and causes for these problems within individual parishes and encourage the parishes to explore ways to reach out to the vastly underserved prison/jail populations and their families to make these communities more a part of our community; and be it further

Resolved that the diocese offer financial support to the Pennsylvania Council of Churches for its *Healing Communities* program and ask for the Council to assist us in developing such a program; and be it further

Resolved that the diocese encourage congregations to offer financial and spiritual support through prayer to the prison ministries of *Contemplative Outreach*, *Foundation of Hope*, and *Bars.Can't.Stop.Love*, with Julie Smith.

Explanation:

To help the diocese and its member parishes carry out the command from Christ to minister to the imprisoned and help them become part of the Episcopal community.

Originator:

Mr. Tom Slater, Calvary, East Liberty

Second Sponsor:

Social Justice and Outreach Committee, Marianne Novy, Chair, Redeemer, Squirrel Hill

Resolution 2.

Resolution Regarding Protecting the Environment

Whereas there is compelling scientific evidence that climate warming is due to human activity, and humans have the responsibility to protect the environment that God has given us rather than damage it, and

Whereas the effects of climate warming fall more heavily on the poor, both nationally and internationally, and it is unjust that they should suffer for the conveniences made possible by our prosperity, be it

Resolved that the Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh commit itself to becoming as thoroughly involved in the larger sacred community of the natural world as possible by promoting environmentally positive actions in its parishes and communities; and be it further

Resolved that we recommend that each parish investigate how to make their buildings as energy-efficient and therefore economical as possible, considering such possibilities as solar panels, LED lighting, and the use of wind energy, and exploring the means for fulfilling these plans through fund-raising and grant writing, for example through The Episcopal Church's Creation Care Fund; and be it further

Resolved that each parish encourage its parishioners to recycle, reuse and reduce their uses of water, electricity, gasoline and other fossil fuels, and plastics, which are polluting the ocean; and be it further

Resolved that each parish explore conditions and needs in their local communities to find ways to contribute to a better environment and cleaner conditions for its neighbors, working with community organizations and already established projects such as Oasis Farm and Fishery in Homewood, Allegheny County Clean Air Now, or the Breathe Project, based in Pittsburgh and southwestern Pennsylvania, when appropriate; and be it further

Resolved, that the diocese and parishes will consider using undeveloped church-owned land for agriculture and biodiversity conservation projects to mitigate climate change and to the extent feasible, parishes will support and encourage locally grown food.

Explanation:

To help the diocese do more to carry out God's command to be good stewards of the earth.

Originator:

Mr. Tom Slater, Calvary, East Liberty

Second Sponsor:

Social Justice and Outreach Committee, Marianne Novy, Chair; Redeemer, Squirrel Hill