

Stewardship of Creation –Taskforce Meeting  
Minutes (April 5, 2005)

The meeting began with the welcoming of our newest member Freya Neely, from the Church of the Nativity, Huntsville. Once again the members of the Task Force contributed wholesome and tasty food for our potluck meal.

Following introductions we opened with a summary of the Diocesan Convention, led by Bishop Andrus. It was reported that a Millennium Development Goals resolution based upon the UN resolution of 2000, was passed. This resolution was co-sponsored by the Task Force, as one of the goals is to ensure environmental sustainability. The UN resolution was signed by 146 countries and the U.S. supported the goals in principle. The AL diocese in support of the MDG resolved to commit 0.7% of mission resources to support international development programs and to challenge each parish to commit 0.7% as well. The primary aim of the development goals is to reduce world poverty by 50% by the year 2015. It was also resolved at convention that our new companion diocese would be in Haiti, whose people suffer from oppressive poverty and whose environment is devastated by widespread deforestation.

We were all happy to hear that the Task Force has been added as a line item in the Diocesan budget.

The Task Force had a booth at convention and Eleanor reported that we had been given \$44 in donation for CD and that she had received a request for a CD from KY. In addition 330 Energy Audits were given away at convention.

Gerri mentioned that she will lead a workshop on how to teach the Study Guide, at All Under One Roof. This is an annual Christian Education event, to be held August 6 at St. Stephen's.

It was reported that the Liaison Luncheon held during convention went very well. In addition Michael Churchman volunteered to coordinate a liaison database. Gerri Aston and Michael suggested organizing the list by convocation as well as by parish.

It was suggested that a letter be sent to the liaisons to have their priests share the CD with their parish, if they had not already done so. It was also suggested that individuals from each convocation, contact other parishes within their convocation who do not currently have liaisons. Bishop Andrus said he would send a letter to the parishes. It was suggested that each of the current liaisons be encouraged to recruit at least one other church in the convocation or another liaison. Gerri mentioned that parish deacons could also encourage/recruit a liaison in their congregations.

Following the discussion on increasing the number of parishes with liaisons to the taskforce we addressed Goals and Guidelines for Liaisons. During the luncheon it was brought out that there is still some confusion as to what the role of the liaisons is to be.

Some of the goals discussed were:

To provide training for the liaisons in leading a Bible study with the CD and in performing an energy audit. It was mentioned that they could launch an environmental awareness event at their parishes with a broad showing of the CD, then announce that the

accompanying Study Guide is available and perhaps schedule a Sunday school class or Bible Study group around it. Upcoming Rogation days or Thanksgiving were suggested as good seasons to begin programs focusing on the environment.

Other goals for the liaisons included: recruiting one other liaison, and to have an energy audit performed in their parish in the next year.

Following this discussion the Task Force decided on a date for the next meeting (July 18, 2005) and discussed dates for the October liaison retreat at Camp McDowell. Other opportunities for focusing on earth spirituality in the region were mentioned including a conference at St. Mary's in Sewanee (April 29-May1) on Opening the Book of Nature.

In addition we were all encouraged and excited about the recent publication of the Episcopal Church's Catechism of Creation. It is available on the church's website: [episcopalchurch.org](http://episcopalchurch.org) under the heading of Science and Technology.

Our meeting continued with an informal discussion of the article "The Death of Environmentalism". We discussed the pros and cons of two different approaches to environmental activism: quite and consistent versus fiery and "out there".

In Task Force business Freya was elected treasurer and Gerri volunteered to coordinate the writing of articles for the Apostle. The articles have a 400 word limit and are due at the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month. Michael agreed to write the first article for the May Apostle on liaisons. We were asked to think about topics for upcoming articles.

The meeting concluded with prayer and doing the dishes.