

2018 Resolution R3: Using Environmentally Friendly Food and Beverage Serving Products

Resolved, that whenever members of our diocesan family gather together around food or drink, we strive to purchase and/or use only reusable, recyclable, and/or biodegradable containers and/or utensils, and

Be it further resolved, that this council encourages our individual congregations and ministries to do the same.

Rationale:

It is written in the Book of Genesis that the human race is to have dominion over God's creation. We have only one planet on which to live; and the awareness of our environment and how we relate to it is of vital importance to the survival of Earth. We pray that "God give us all a reverence for the Earth as God's own creation, that we might use its resources rightly in the service of others and to God's Honor and Glory," (BCP: Prayer of the People, Form IV, p. 388)

We pray "for the Good Earth which God has given us, and for the wisdom and the will to preserve it", (BCP, Prayers of the People Form I, p. 384), and we pray further for the "wisdom and reverence so to use the resources of nature, that no one may suffer from our abuse of them, and that generations yet to come may continue to praise you for your bounty", (BCP, Prayer for the Conservation of Natural Resources, p. 827).

"Eco-justice ministries seek to heal, defend, and work toward justice for all God's creation and to respect the kinship and connection of all that God created through education, advocacy, and action. In order to create capacity in the church for environmental stewardship initiatives, and in response to Resolution A030 of the 78th General Convention, [of the Episcopal Church, USA], the Advisory Council for the Stewardship of Creation was appointed in 2016" (<https://www.episcopalchurch.org/stewardship-creation>).

The use of disposable products for coffee hours, parish dinners, and other church related events are used primarily for convenience. When such products are non-recyclable and or non-compostable, we are damaging that which God has entrusted to our stewardship.

The Episcopal Youth Community of our diocese has already led the way in this direction by presenting a resolution concerning the use of non-recyclable/non-compostable products disposable products in our churches which was passed unanimously by the 98th Annual Council (R-2, p.64 of The 98th Council of the Diocese of Southern Virginia), and

the Rector and Vestry of St. Martin's, Williamsburg reiterated the importance of the 1990 resolution with a follow-up resolution which was passed unanimously by the 99th Annual Council (R-10, of the 99th Council of the Diocese of Southern Virginia.)

We, the Episcopal Churches of the Diocese of Southern Virginia, have the opportunity to demonstrate by example what it means to care for "this fragile Earth our island home", (BCP, Eucharistic Prayer C, p. 370).

Submitted by the Parish Life and Creation Care Commissions of All Saints' Episcopal Church, Virginia Beach