

Resolution 2: On Planting Trees to Celebrate Special Occasions

Submitted by: Abbott McCartney and Joanne Hutton, St. John's, Lafayette Square, with co-sponsors St. Dunstan's, St. Nicholas', Epiphany, DC, Cathedral Congregation Creation Care Committee, and Southern Africa Link Committee.

- 1 **RESOLVED**, that the One Hundred Twenty-Eighth Convention of the Diocese of Washington encourages
- 2 individuals, parishes, and other church-related organizations:
- 3 • To plant native and non-invasive trees as part of the celebration of special occasions such
- 4 as confirmations, baptisms, marriages, birthdays, memorials, and patronal festivals.
- 5 • To care for the trees once planted, for trees need to be watered and cared for.
- 6 • To safeguard the trees against invasive, non-native plant species.

EXPLANATION

This resolution seeks to encourage parishes, schools, and other church organizations in the Diocese to plant trees in celebration of special occasions as a symbol of our love of all God's creation and as an act of environmental justice for all.

Last Summer's 2022 Episcopal Church General Convention endorsed tree planting as part of the 2022 launch of the "Communion Forest" by the Lambeth Conference, the once-a-decade gathering of bishops from throughout the Worldwide Anglican Communion. The General Convention resolved "[t]hat the dioceses of the Episcopal Church pledge to support the Communion Forest initiative... to plant trees, practice reforestation and regenerative agriculture, protect forests and other plant communities..."

Planting of trees to celebrate special occasions is a foundational feature of the Communion Forest. See www.communionforest.org. As the Archbishop of Canterbury has observed, these "are spiritual acts too, for to plant is to hope, to protect is to love and to restore is to heal – to share in God's reconciling work in all creation..."

Environmental justice is at the heart of a tree-growing ministry. There is an established nexus between environmental stressors and poor behavioral and mental health outcomes. Tree growing protects our wellbeing and our fragile earth in many ways by reducing air pollution, offsetting carbon emissions, creating green spaces for rest and recreation, providing shade, especially as temperatures rise due to climate change, improving biodiversity, saving water, preventing erosion, and limiting flooding.

By planting trees to celebrate special occasions, this Diocese will join others in collective global action to address human suffering, social inequity, and economic instability flowing from a warming planet and other ecological concerns.

This resolution will not impose any costs on the Diocesan budget.

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