Overcoming the Conflict Myth

Engaging Science, Technology & Faith at the Grassroots
What is the Episcopal Church Foundation (ECF)?

Overview:
• Independent and lay-led foundation
• ECF’s mission is to strengthen the **leadership** and **financial** capabilities of Episcopal congregations, dioceses, and other institutions
• ECF carries out this mission through a wide array of programs including…

**Leadership Resources**
• ECF Vital Practices (ecfvp.org)
• Vestry Resource Guide
• Fellowship Partners Program
• Vital Teams
• Educational Events

**Financial Resources**
• Capital Campaigns
• Planned Giving
• Endowment Management
• Funding Future Ministry
• Educational Events
ECF Fellowship Partners Program

Innovative scholars and ministry leaders transform lives.

Since 1964 the Episcopal Church Foundation (ECF) has provided financial support to emerging scholars and ministry leaders throughout the Episcopal Church. In addition to financial support, ECF helps these individuals to share their knowledge, experience, and best practices with the wider Church in practical ways.

Open to both lay and ordained Episcopalians, ECF builds a relationship with Fellows not only when they are receiving financial support, but over the long haul, so that our community of Fellows may serve as a gift and resource to the Church in serving God’s mission.
– Précis –

✎ Part I: Brief overview of the issues
☞ What’s the prevailing common opinion? What’s the academic consensus?

✎ Part II: How does The Episcopal Church approach the issues?
☞ Orientation, organization, mechanisms

~ Brief discussion / Q&A ~

✎ Part III: Practical pointers for dialogue
☞ Ideas and resources for parish/diocesan engagement

✎ Part IV: Group discussion/sharing
☞ Questions, ideas, best practices
THE FIGHT OF THE CENTURY

THERE'S NO BETTER WAY TO SETTLE THE FIGHT THAN WITH TWO PAIR OF GLOVES ON A SATURDAY NIGHT!

WHO WILL WIN?

IT'S MAN VS. MONKEY IN AN ALL OUT BRAWL!

SCIENCE VS. RELIGION

A.K.A. DARWINISM A.K.A. THE THEORY OF EVOLUTION

A.K.A. CREATIONISM A.K.A. INTELLIGENT DESIGN

THE WINNER WILL DECIDE ONCE AND FOR ALL HOW WE ACTUALLY GOT HERE!

THE BIBLE BELT IS UP FOR GRABS!

ONLY ON PAY-PER-VIEW!
Deconstructing the “conflict myth”…

War between science and religion?

So where does it come from?

Draper-White and the origins of the “conflict myth”

Historians: more complicated, more exciting
Deconstructing the “conflict myth”…

Conflict
Independence
Dialogue
Integration

Barbour’s four-fold typology
Deconstructing the “conflict myth”...

- Philosophers: reductionism, materialism, naturalism (methodological vs. metaphysical)

- Theologians: truth does not contradict truth, legitimate spheres of inquiry (fides et ratio)
GC77-Res. A136:

“Affirming the Compatibility of Science and the Christian Faith”

“The 77th General Convention affirms that there is no inherent contradiction between holding and practicing the Christian faith and practicing or utilizing the outcomes of science and medicine.”

“The proper practice of science cannot and does not automatically lead its practitioners or others to lose faith in God, or to be led into beliefs that contradict the existence of God.”
Engaging the Episcopal way…

Res. A136 (cont’d)

“The methods of science, when applied to a search for truth, contribute to our understanding of God’s Creation such that we should use scientific information, after diligence as to its acceptance among scientific peers in relevant disciplines, to inform and augment our understanding of God’s Creation, and to aid the Church in developing Christian programs and policies consistent with our faith and our understanding of God’s Creation and our stewardship of it.”

“This Convention encourages the dioceses and the parishes of The Episcopal Church to establish Christian education programs pertinent to this complementary relationship between science and faith.”
Executive Council Committee on Science, Technology and Faith (ECCSTF)

- Mandate
- Composition
- Resolutions

Engaging the Episcopal way...
Engaging the Episcopal way…

- Episcopal Network for Science, Technology & Faith (ENSTF)
  - Mission
  - Officers
  - Local Chapters

- Ecumenical Roundtable on Science, Technology & Faith
  - Annual gathering of TEC, ELCA, PCUSA, UCC, UMC, etc.
Empowered for engagement…

Ideas/resources for the parish

Speaker series
- Academics, community leaders, scientists in your pews, ecumenical/interfaith panels

Discussion groups / ‘study circles’
- Curricula:
  - ‘Catechism of Creation’
- Essays/Books:
  - ‘Sketches towards a theology of science’ (Episcopal Church of Scotland)
  - ISSR Library/Companion
- Multimedia:
  - ‘Test of Faith’
  - ‘Painting the Stars: Science, Religion, and Evolving Faith’
  - Faraday / Ian Ramsey lectures/seminars
Empowered for engagement...

- Ideas/resources for the parish (cont’d)
  - Lenten series
    - Bp. Nick Knisely:
      - “Lent is not Rocket Science”
  - Youth/Confirmation
    - Catechism & Confirmation
  - Campus ministry
  - Parish library
Empowered for engagement…

Liturgy:
- Sermons (clergy and laity!)
- Collects
- Hymnody
- Tie-ins
  - Feast of...
    - Teilhard de Chardin (Apr. 10)
    - Copernicus/Kepler (May 23)
    - St. Francis of Assisi (Oct. 4)
    - CS Lewis (Nov. 22)
  - Lenten Carbon Fast

Praise the Source of Faith and Learning
(Words by the Reverend Thomas Troeger)

Praise the source of faith and learning
that has sparked and stoked the mind
With a passion for discerning
how the world has been designed.
Let the sense of wonder flowing
from the wonders we survey
Keep our faith forever growing
and renew our need to pray.

God of wisdom, we acknowledge
that our science and our art
And the breadth of human knowledge
only partial truth impart.
Far beyond our grasp lies a depth we see
Where your purview and the pulse of

Prayers for the Natural Order

40. For Knowledge of God's Creation

Almighty and everlasting God, you made the universe with all its marvelous order, its atoms, worlds, and galaxies, and the infinite complexity of living creatures: Grant that, as we probe the mysteries of your creation, we may come to know you more truly, and more surely fulfill our role in your eternal purpose; in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.
Empowered for engagement…

- ENSTF Local Chapters: Parish/Deanery/Diocese
  - Speaker series
  - Discussion groups / ‘study circles’
  - Ecumenical/interfaith discussions
  - Media outreach

- Convention
  - Resolutions,
    specialist/personal testimony
Engaging the Episcopal way…

- Communications
  - Traditional media outlets
  - Social media
Empowered for engagement…

Communications

- Personal/parochial/diocesan:
  - Social media, blogs, newsletters/magazines

- Secular:
  - Op-eds, letters to the editor
  - Local media coverage of parish events/activities
  - ‘Public insight’ for NPR-affiliate
Empowered for engagement...

Resources:

☞ ECCSTF:
  ➢ http://www.generalconvention.org/ccab/mandate/368

☞ ENSTF:
  ➢ http://episcopalscience.org
  ➢ http://facebook.com/episcopsalscience
  ➢ http://twitter.com/episcopsci / @episcosci

☞ ISSR Library/Companion:
  ➢ http://www.issrlibrary.org
  ➢ ISSR Library Companion: http://books.google.com/books?id=mPwmLoLrVb0C

☞ Academic centers:
  ➢ Faraday Institute for Science and Religion (Cambridge, UK):
    http://www.faraday.st-edmunds.cam.ac.uk
  ➢ Ian Ramsey Centre for Science and Religion (Oxford, UK):
    http://www.ianramseycentre.info
  ➢ Center for Theology and the Natural Sciences (Berkeley, CA): http://www.ctns.org
  ➢ Zygon Center for Religion and Science (Chicago, IL): http://zygoncenter.org
Empowered for engagement...

Resources:

- Video series:
  - Test of Faith: http://www.testoffaith.com

- Curricula:
  - ENSTF ‘Catechism of Creation’
    - http://episcopalscience.org/resources/catechism-creation/
  - ELCA ‘Faith and Science’ (3-session curriculum for youth):
  - ELCA ‘Catechism’ (3-session curriculum for confirmation):
  - ELCA ‘Faith and Science in Dialogue’ (for college campus ministry)

- Sermon series:
  - Robinson College Chapel, Cambridge:
  - The Clergy Letter Project: http://www.theclergyletterproject.org/

- Technology and faith:
  - Techrament: http://techrament.com

- The Society of Ordained Scientists (SOSC)
  - http://www.ordainedscientists.org
Empowered for engagement…

Resources:

Select articles/podcasts:

- Alvin Plantiga, “Science and Religion” (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy):
  - http://www.sciencemag.org/content/282/5396/1985.full
- Peter Harrison, “Science and Religion,” Oxford University Podcast:
  - http://podcasts.ox.ac.uk/peter-harrison-science-and-religion
- “Misconceptions of science and religion found in new study” (re: study of Rice University sociologist, Dr. Elaine Howard Ecklund, titled “Religious Understandings of Science” presented at the 2014 American Association for the Advancement of Science):
- “Sketches Towards a Theology of Science” (Episcopal Church of Scotland):
- “Science and Faith in Harmony: Positive ways to Include Science in Worship”:
- The Rt. Rev. Nicholas Knisely (D of RI), “Lent is not Rocket Science”
Empowered for engagement…

Next steps…

Marvel

- Wonder is worship
  - “How wondrous are your works, O Lord…” (Psalm 92.5)

Do

- State your case: Make your life your argument
  - “You shall love me with all your heart, soul, and mind…” (Matt. 22.37)

Go

- Going is at the heart of the Great Commission
  - “Go therefore…” (Matt. 28.19)

Share

- Witness is sharing your story—communicate, contribute, converse, counter the clamorous
  - “Go into all the world and share the good news…” (Mark 16.15)
Contact info...

- Email: j.wolyniak@gmail.com
- Facebook: facebook.com/joseph.wolyniak
- Twitter: @JosephWolyniak
- Academia.edu: oxford.academia.edu/JosephWolyniak