

inclusive liturgies for events that touch people's lives, for which there currently exists no authorized rite. The bond between humans and their animal companions can be strong, causing a deep sense of loss, grief (or even guilt) over the animal's death, especially when dealing with the loss alone, without the presence of their community of faith, or having the preconception that such an event falls outside the interest of their church. Our animal companions provide a unique connection to creation and expand our sense of God's diverse gifts in creation. In many cases they also join us as partners in ministry, in such capacities as assistance animals, i.e., seeing eye dogs, etc. as well as therapy dogs and cats used in health care facilities and for pastoral care. An authorized rite in the Book of Occasional Services would give clergy and others a resource for offering pastoral care at the death of a companion animal.

Resolution D016

Adopted by the General Convention of the Episcopal Church 2003

Title: The Protection of Animals from Cruel Treatment

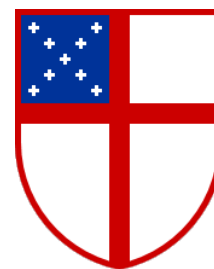
Resolved, the House of Bishops concurring, That the 74th General Convention recognize that responsible care of animals falls within the stewardship of creation; and be it further

Resolved, That the Episcopal Church encourage its members to ensure that husbandry methods for captive and domestic animals would prohibit suffering in such conditions as puppy mills, and factory-farms; and be it further

Resolved, That the Episcopal Church's Peace and Justice Office identify existing guidelines to educate its members to adhere to ethical standards in the care and treatment of animals; and be it further

Resolved, That the Episcopal Church, through its Office of Government Relations, identify and advocate for legislation protecting animals and effective enforcement measures.

Animal Related Resolutions of the Episcopal Church



Compiled by the
Episcopal Network for Animal Welfare
<http://enaw.org>



Resolution D015

Adopted in 2009 by the General Convention of the Episcopal Church

Title: Merciful and Humane Treatment of God's Creatures

Resolved, the House of Deputies concurring, That the 76th General Convention support the humane and merciful treatment of all of God's Creatures; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention urge Diocesan Environmental Commissions or Committees to provide information to educate our congregations about decisions that would affect the lives and health of endangered species, farmed food animals and domesticated animals; and be it further

Resolved, That each congregation be encouraged to refer this resolution to their outreach committee or other such venue in order to ensure the education and dissemination of information to their members about endangered species, farmed food animals and domesticated animals.

EXPLANATION

The Christian Tradition holds that God has created the earth and all that lives herein. It teaches that all God created is "good", and further, that we are held accountable for the right stewardship of God's creation. A number of endangered species are rapidly becoming extinct; a notable example is the Red Knot bird that traverses between Argentina and the Arctic with a key food stop in New Jersey where one specific local species is under siege threatening the elimination of the Red Knot's critical food, the eggs of the horseshoe crab, by the crabs' over-capture as fishing bait. And overdevelopment of United States' virgin lands has put a large variety of indigenous species' existence in imminent jeopardy.

Food animals continue to be cruelly and mercilessly treated: pregnant sows are totally confined in gestation crates, veal calves are penned in veal crates and are barely able to move around or even stand up; chickens are crammed together for life into battery cages in a space no larger than this page; geese are brutally force fed to make foie gras; grazing animals are fed antibiotics to increase size, that are then contained within their meat, passing these antibiotics on to consuming humans who become more and more

vulnerable to resistant bacterial strains. Huge factory farms house animals in deplorable and unsanitary conditions resulting in foul run off, polluted ground water, and contamination linked to human diseases. Stressed food animals produce stress hormones.

This can compromise their immune systems. Antibiotics are in turn routinely given to ensure that the animals are not overwhelmed by ambient microorganisms. Small doses of these antibiotics, showing up in the meat eaten by humans, actually increase human vulnerability to resistant strains of microorganisms.

By education we can make a real difference in the level of awareness of these problems and practices. Congregations can become aware of the most vulnerable of God's creation and respect the dignity of "all things bright and beautiful, all creatures great and small, all things wise and wonderful, the Lord God made them all" (Cecil Frances Alexander, Hymn 405 in Hymnal 1982).

Resolution C078

Adopted in 2009 by the General Convention of the Episcopal Church

Title: Liturgy for the Loss of a Companion Animal

Resolved, the House of Deputies concurring, That this 76th General Convention reaffirm that all animals are a part of All Creation, for which we are called to be stewards of God's gifts; and be it further

Resolved, That the Episcopal Church embrace the opportunity for pastoral care for people who grieve the loss of a companion animal; and be it further

Resolved, That this General Convention direct the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music to develop liturgical resources to observe the loss of a companion animal and that it report its work to the 77th General Convention.

EXPLANATION

Various groups within the Church have shown an interest in developing