

Constable Fund Application Form Summary Page

Programmatic Head submitting this application: Bud Holland with Thom Chu

Date of Application: September 22, 2004

Project Title and one-paragraph description: **Strengthening Theological Education, Lifelong learning and Christian formation in the Episcopal Church**

This application seeks to creatively synthesize two sets of activities concurred by General Convention 2003 but were not funded. Resolution 2003-A120 called for a six-year study of theological education and resolution 2003-B024 requested a task force on Christian education and formation with a nine-year span. Acknowledging that both requests were aimed at comprehensive review and strategy in education, Executive Council recommended in June 2004 the blending these two mandates. Based in the work of a one-time consultation in August 2004 with the respective resolutions' sponsors and Church Center staff, the detail following outlines a two-phase process of broad consultation with existing theological education and Christian education networks making optimal use of people, relational connections, and funds. A twelve-member strategy team appointed by the presiding officers in consultation with the Standing Commission on Ministry Development will consult with education and ministry networks, gather theological education resource leaders, and formulate strategic suggestions. The eventual product of this work will be an update to the 2006 convention and recommendations to the 2009 convention with possible budgetary and canonical implications.

Amount requested from the Constable Fund:

Phase I (August 2004-January 2007):	\$136,000
Phase II (February 2007-November 2009):	\$88,000
Total request:	\$224,000

Timetable for the Project: Planning and Consultations: August 2004-January 2007

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Reports to 2006 and 2009 General Conventions through Blue Book
Report of the Standing Commission on Ministry Development and
Executive Council
Consultation and Implementation: February 2007-
November 2009

Introduction

Baptism is the beginning of an ever-onward process of growth in Christ. The main purpose of theological education is to better equip the people of God for faithful and effective servant leadership. Theological education and reflection takes place throughout the church, and beyond the institutional church in homes, hospitals, and even in corporate board rooms.

In 1988, a special task force on Christian education reported to General Convention of the Episcopal Church:

One of the greatest challenges to the leadership of the Church is the empowerment of all Christians through both formal and informal learning opportunities. It is the responsibility of the leadership in each congregation to establish and to develop an environment that enables people to discover themselves as God's people and to carry out the ministries to which they are called. It is through this vision and leadership that the whole congregation comes to feel its responsibility for community and total ministry within the life of the Church. (Quoted in *Called to Teach and Learn: A Catechetical Guide for the Episcopal Church*).

The following resolutions regarding education and formation were adopted at the 74th General Convention in 2003.

2003-A120 proposed by the Theological Education Task Force of the Standing Commission on Ministry Development (SCMD), was concurred with no funding at the 74th General Convention. There was substantial groundwork done in SCMD prior to submission of this resolution (see explanation appended at the end of this document).

Resolved, That the 74th General Convention direct the Standing Commission for Ministry Development, contingent upon finding funding from other sources outside of General Convention, to convene a Strategic Planning Committee, consisting of bishops, seminary deans, and provincial representatives; and be it further

Resolved, That this Committee is to function in a broad collaborative manner for six years to prepare an in-depth study that will chart the future of theological education in the Church; and be it further

Resolved, That the Standing Commission on Ministry Development will report on the work of this Strategic Planning Committee to the 75th General Convention and will deliver its final report to the 76th General Convention.

Explanation: SCMD found that since the Pusey Commission of the 1960s the Church has not taken an in depth and systematic look at theological education. Since that time the Church has returned to an ancient understanding of ministry as expressed in the 1979 Prayer Book (see SCMD Theological Education Task Force Report, p.238, 74th G.C. Blue Book Report). SCMD noted that the 20/20 Report articulates the need for "creative and innovative approaches to theological education and leadership training (which) are fundamental to any vision for the future." It continues that "Dioceses, congregations, organizations and seminaries are looking at leadership in new ways, and there is an increasing realization that leadership development and leadership education are a fundamental part of the work of all of these entities." At the same time that there is an incredible

thirst for learning in the Church there is also substantial financial uncertainty for most of our seminaries, diocesan schools and theological students who incur major debt.

2003-B024 was also concurred by the 74th General Convention with no funding. It reads as follows:

Resolved, the House of Deputies concurring, That the 74th General Convention authorize the creation of a nine-year Task Force of Executive Council on Lifelong Christian Education and Formation that will

- Develop a comprehensive vision and strategy to strengthen Lifelong Christian Education and Formation throughout the Episcopal Church and equip people of all ages to experience, to tell about and to invite others into the Good News of the Gospel;
- Integrate Christian Formation into every area of the church's mission and ministry, recognizing that learning occurs in multiple ways throughout the entire life cycle;
- Identify and communicate resources and models that support the gifts and needs of a church of great diversity and that promote outcomes recommended by the 20/20 Strategy Group;
- Encourage conversation and collaboration among the many entities in the church that address specific aspects of Christian Education and Formation for mission and ministry;
- Provide international and ecumenical links for Christian Education and Formation; and be it further

Resolved, That this Task Force be composed of sixteen members: four bishops; four clergy; and eight lay persons; that the Task Force will meet at least two times a year, commencing in 2004, with additional small gatherings for conversation with selected groups involved in lifelong learning and formation; and that the Task Force will report on its work beginning at the 75th General Convention in 2006.

B024 arose out the 2003 convention in part due to the creativity and enthusiasm demonstrated by Christian educators and church leaders earlier that year at the conference "Will Our Faith Have Children: Christian Formation Generation to Generation" conference and the energy generated by the first-ever children's program at General Convention developed by the Diocese of Minnesota and the first-ever "holistic young adult experience" at General Convention itself.

Subsequent to approval resolution 2003-B024 was referred by the General Convention to the Executive Council and Resolution 2003-A120 was referred to the Standing Commission on Ministry Development. In June 2004 Executive Council expressed a wish that proponents of these two resolutions meet and seek a way to combine the two into a single resolution that would integrate and address the intentions of both. Such a meeting was held at the Church Center on August 19-20 where there was agreement by the sponsors of the two resolutions that the work would proceed under one "strategy team." This grant request reflects that agreement to work together.

At the August 2004 meeting participants articulated these points of agreement:

- We need a shared commitment to education for the current and future church.
- Education is central to carrying out the mission of the church (living out God's mission).
- There is a need to equip the baptized for ministry.
- Education provides essential tools for discerning, understanding, owning and living out the mission of God and the church's role and mission within it.
- Education is critical for understanding multicultural and multi-language realities of today's church.
- We need to build learning communities where people are transformed in Christ.

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- Education is critical to creating a needed cadre of specialists such as church planters as well as people who can respond to change and share resources with people in times of crisis.
- It is important to assist people to engage in theological reflection in the world and to participate in dialogues around incarnating our faith journeys in the areas of justice, peace, love, and reconciliation.
- There is a critical need to rediscover, redefine, and rebuild partnerships among seminaries, dioceses, congregations, a diverse population, and other peoples of faith.
- We cannot assume that Christian formation will happen but rather we need to be intentional at basic levels.
- We cannot take for granted a common understanding of the denomination.
- We need to listen and discern education needs broadly (age, gender, region, race, culture, varieties of contexts).
- It would be most helpful to have a firm foundation from which to respond to trends in theological/biblical scholarship and issues within our living.

Plan of action

The SCMD, Office for Ministry Development, and the Ministries with Young People Cluster, with support from the sponsors of A120 and B024 propose the creation of a new theological education “strategy team” with representation from around the Church to design and test by the end of 2006 a planning process. We believe this is a creative way to respond to these resolutions. Such a response would include the following components:

1. Articulates/expresses/leads to a coherent and compelling vision for theological education, Christian education, and lifelong formation for the mission and ministry of each member in the Episcopal Church.
2. Identifies the optimal systemic structures to implement this vision.
3. Engages participants in a reflective and dialogical process that benefits them in the short term as well as in the long-haul.
4. Makes use of grassroots networks as well as ways of hearing new voices to assure broad access, deep information-sharing, local applicability and broad “buy in.”
5. Addresses specific planning needs of the stakeholder groups, including seminaries, the Episcopal Council of Christian Education (ECCE), and other groups.
6. Provides opportunities to share emerging vision and learning as well as sharing feedback all along the way.
7. Reports outcomes of the design work, test results, and next steps to the General Convention 2006.
8. Establishes and leads an ongoing process that results in concrete recommendations regarding a coherent and compelling vision for theological education, Christian education and lifelong formation in the Episcopal Church and identifies the optimal structures to implement this vision by the General Convention 2009.

This “strategy team” should have a breadth of experience in theological education and be representative of the diversity of the Church. This interactive team will be in contact with the several networks involved with theological education. It will consist of 12 members and be staffed by OMD and the MYP. In addition, the team will consult with other denominations with experience in strategic planning in theological education. The “strategy team” will report regularly to SCMD as well as to Executive Council. It will be appointed by the Presiding Bishop, the President of the House of Deputies, in consultation with the Chair of SCMD.

Methods proposed for this work

The strategy team will initiate and direct a systematic and thorough process of engaging the Church in studying and re-visioning theological education in the many different settings in the Church, (seminaries, diocesan schools, congregations, local ministry development programs, life-long learning including continuing education, ministry in daily life initiatives, other diocesan programs, various education and ministry development groups and initiatives, technology including on-line education, etc.) with sensitivity to diversity, to explore, evaluate and suggest possible areas of development. This team will connect broadly with the many networks engaged in theological education and Christian formation including a major study in the Anglican Communion (theological education in the Anglican Communion—TEAC) so that the broadest spectrum of voices and work may be heard. Throughout the study and dialogue process suggestions will be offered to encourage information sharing and collaborative work so that the educational life of the church is constantly being enhanced.

Using the collected data, evaluations, and recommendations, the strategy team will begin to develop and recommend a strategic vision for theological education and nurture of lifelong faith formation in the Church for the decades ahead with boldness and imagination. With a perception that religious education is a life-long process the strategy team will seek to develop the leadership that can lead the church to strengthen and create new forms of theological education that respond to the needs of the church. The needs to be addressed have emerged from the liturgical context of the 1979 Book of Common Prayer, the ordination of women, the renewed emphasis on the ministry of deacons, and the revival of the ministry and leadership of the laity in the life of the Church and in their daily lives, as well as from transitions in the patterns of life of all the Church's institutions.

Expected Outcomes

With partnership support from the Constable Fund, SCMD, the Office for Ministry Development, and the Ministries with Young People Cluster we look forward to the following:

1. An exploration and integration between education, mission and ministry into the relationship between education, mission, and ministry and making recommendations about how education might be more creatively woven into the fabric of all that we do as a community of faith.
2. A growing awareness by the whole Church, and especially those involved in the implementation of programs of the big picture of theological education, Christian formation, and lifelong faith formation.
3. A comprehensive, strategic vision for theological education and Christian formation for the Church.
4. Specific recommendations for implementing that strategy.
5. An improved system of delivering theological education and Christian formation, balancing the needs of those being educated for leadership today with the needs of congregations of the future. More experimentation with techniques of technology, including distance learning and respect for different learning styles.

6. The continued evolution of a creative curriculum for all leaders and members geared toward a multicultural context. We seek a careful balance between theological understanding and disciplines and the practical skills for ministry that will equip leaders and members for the Church in the future. We envision that resources for congregations in Biblical studies, our religious tradition and heritage, theological reflection, Christian formation, and a whole host of other important areas will be made more readily available and accessible to assist people in their life and work in the Church and in their daily living.
7. New partnerships, broader and more effective participation in continuing education.
8. Integration of different facets of program, networks, and resources of theological education and Christian formation where possible and advisable to create efficiencies of resources.
9. The gathering of the wisdom of other denominations and faith traditions in order to understand their potential contribution to our educational efforts.
10. Recommendations of how the Church might more effectively financially support theological education and Christian formation for clergy and lay persons as well as the various institutions that provide that education.
11. The exploration of new ways and avenues of learning while drawing upon the most creative minds throughout the world to share insights about pedagogical methods of teaching and learning and formation processes.
12. Linkages between diocesan schools and seminaries in an effort to improve their common service to the Church.
13. Bring to the attention of the church the various networks that exist or that might be formed to bind together more effectively our efforts regarding theological education and Christian formation.
14. Develop and enhance the theological and scholarly base of the Church's educational offerings.

Evaluation

Each year careful evaluation will be conducted on the work of the Strategy Team, and reports and a feedback mechanism will be submitted to the Standing Commission on Ministry Development, the House of Bishops, the Council of Deans, Provinces, and Executive Council. Programmatic and fiscal updates will be reported to SCMD and to the Executive Council on a six-month basis. The Office for Ministry Development and the Ministries with Young People Cluster will take responsibility for assuring that all reports are made in a timely manner, will serve as staff support to this committee, and will be involved in all aspects of its work.

A report on the work of the Strategy Team will be made to the 75th General Convention through the Blue Book Report of SCMD and perhaps in other venues and a final report will be made to the 76th Convention about ways in which this crucial component in our common life can be engaged and supported more fully.

Conclusion

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As the church seeks to prepare God's people for mission and ministry for the 21st century it needs to put new wine into new wineskins. In order to carry out God's mission, the church needs educated members and leaders who are faithful, creative, and competent. Therefore it must seek to evaluate the old wineskins and develop creative and innovative educational programs and structures that give all of its members the resources they need to be engaged in this most important work. We believe it is time for the church to do this work comprehensively, strategically, and collaboratively.

Constable Grant Request Narrative Budget

Phase I: Consultation Phase: August 2004 - January 2007

The strategy team will initiate the transformational planning process, which process will not only chart the work needed in the next triennium but also provide ways to engage the church (and the networks within the church) to ascertain the educational needs of the church and to recommend ways to meet those needs. A major religious education consultation will occur in early 2006, sponsored by the Theological Education for All project of the Episcopal Seminaries, the Office for Ministry Development, and the Ministries with Young People Cluster, will bring together many of the providers of theological education to strengthen the church's response to its educational needs.

Assuming funding is available, the strategy team will be appointed and begin its work in the fall of 2004. It is anticipated that five meetings will need to occur between November, 2004 and January, 2007. Each of the meetings will be three days and two nights.

Preliminary Planning meeting with sponsors of B024, A120, and Executive Council	
August 19-20, 2004: Airfare, hotel, and meals (15 people)	\$ 6,000
Convene 5 plenary meetings over 2+ years (12 persons @ \$1000 per person)	\$ 60,000
Small group team meetings	\$ 30,000
Consultations with education and ministry networks	\$ 30,000
Printing, publications, resource materials	\$ 10,000
Total for Phase I (including preliminary meeting):	\$ 136,000

Other work would be done by listserv or dedicated web site, conference calls, visits to networks, etc. Smaller group line item could include a sub-group of our strategic team or another small group meeting of theologians, ministry developers, etc.

Phase II: Consultation Phase (continued) and Implementation Phase: February 2007 - November 2009

This phase will continue the work and base established by the strategy team, and follow up on the results of the major theological education consultation held in 2006 and the actions of the General Convention 2006. It is anticipated that additional recommendations will be made to the General Convention 2009 regarding a strategic vision for theological education and the structures that will be needed to implement that vision fully. The work of the strategy team will be to bring together the accumulated wisdom of the efforts accomplished and make them known to the church. The strategy team, in consultation with SCMD and other appropriate bodies of the church, will make recommendations about the structures that would be most helpful in providing for the educational needs of the church. These recommendations may involve canonical revisions. This will be the phase to take the time needed to make these recommendations which would have longstanding implications for the educational life of the church.

Convene 4 plenary meetings over 2+ years (12 persons @ \$1,000 per person)	\$ 48,000
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Small group team meeting(s)	\$ 10,000
Gathering of theological education resource leaders	\$ 30,000
Total for Phase II:	\$ 88,000

Total Project Budget **\$224,000**

Addendum A

Background to A120 – The State of Theological Education in ECUSA

The Standing Commission on Ministry Development (SCMD) has a broad mandate from General Convention to review the status of theological education and to make recommendations to General Convention about possible courses of action to strengthen theological education throughout the Church. The Standing Commission has assumed the functions of the former Board for Theological Education and Council for the Development of Ministry since SCMD's inception in 1997. One of the important task forces on SCMD is the Theological Education Task Force.

The Theological Education Task Force surveyed the Church during the last triennium and found wonderful programs going on regarding theological education in many different settings for both clergy and lay. (For information see www.teforall.org.) These include seminaries, diocesan schools, local ministry development programs; life-long learning, continuing education opportunities, and other diocesan programs. However, there are significant inconsistencies in the quality and quantity of those programs; less than desired coordination among providers; debates over portability; and no comprehensive or strategic vision for the Church with regard to theological education. Also, the General Board of Examining Chaplains is again reviewing the purpose, nature, and timing of the General Ordination Examinations.

SCMD found that since the Pusey Commission of the 1960s the Church has not taken an in depth and systematic look at theological education and much has changed since that time. There is now a broadened understanding of ministry as expressed in the Episcopal Book of Common Prayer of 1979 (see SCMD Theological Education Task Force Report, p.238, 74th G.C. Blue Book Report). We are at a time of financial uncertainty for all institutions.

As the Church seeks to recruit, encourage, and educate younger persons into active Church membership and involvement there is a need for substantially increased funding to bring the seminaries into a strong financial position and to permit them to attain higher levels of excellence as they are stretched by unusually high enrollments, deferred maintenance, and rising costs. There are important questions that need to be asked, such as: the most important areas of knowledge necessary for good theological education; the educational outcomes expected for ministry training; and common ways to assess the results of theological education programs.

Furthermore, it is important that a way is found to integrate into the dioceses the concept of life long learning, and that opportunities are made available in each diocese of the Church to explain to laity and clergy alike the goals, methods, and approach of developing baptismal ministry for all, and for partnerships to be formed which would allow the seminaries to integrate these insights into their own preparation of men and women for the priesthood.

Resources exist that if strategically used could take the Church to new levels of educational vitality, an essential movement if we are to engage fully in God's Mission. However, the first requirement is a mutually shared vision.

SCMD proposed response to these problems and needs

If the Church is to be transformed for the 21st century and to be responsive to the paradigm shift of the emerging Church, it needs to:

1. Look at the big picture of theological education as it seeks to form Christ-like persons for loving service to God, neighbor and all creation. Develop a strategic vision for the theological life of the Church through discussion of the key issues with seminaries, diocesan schools, bishops, and other persons and groups who are constituents of theological education which will enable it to serve the wider Church by providing well-formed disciples to carry out its mission and ministry in the world.
2. Assess existing resources, identify gaps and duplication. Articulate priorities.
3. Chart the future for theological education in the Church for the decades ahead to enable the church's theological institutions and programs to thrive and prosper as they provide better theological education for lay persons, deacons, priests and bishops.

Addendum B

Participants at the August, 2004 meeting working to blend Resolutions A120 and B024 and to arrive at an agreement to work together:

Edward deBary
Recently retired director of Education for Ministry (EFM)

Linda Grenz
Founder, LeaderResources

Fredrica Thompsett
Professor, Episcopal Divinity School

Frederick Borsch
Bishop of Los Angeles (retired), Chair of Anglican Studies at Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia

Ruth Ann Collins,
Province II Representative to ECCE (Episcopal Council for Christian Education)
Director of Christian Education, Cathedral of the Incarnation, Garden City NY

Jim Kelsey
Bishop of Northern Michigan
Co-chair, Theological Education committee of the Standing Commission on Ministry Development
Leader in the total ministry movement

Ted Mollegen
Member of Executive Council

Donn Morgan
Dean and President, Church Divinity School of the Pacific
Co-chair, Theological Education committee of the Standing Commission on Ministry Development
Convenor, Council of Seminary Deans

Wayne Schwab
Retired Evangelism Officer, Episcopal Church Center, author of *It's Time for a New Take on Mission*

Anne Tuohy
Christian Education and Formation Committee Chair, Province V

Thom Chu, Bud Holland, Molly Shaw, Margaret Stevens
Episcopal Church Center staff

Wally Fletcher
Facilitator, Dialogue Center
Past facilitator, *Will Our Faith Have Children?*

Invited but not able to participate:
Wilfrido Ramos-Orench
Executive Council member
Bishop Suffragan, Diocese of Connecticut

Mark Andrus
Sponsor of resolution 2003-B024
Bishop Suffragan, Diocese of Alabama