

**GENERAL CONVENTION OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH 2009
ARCHIVES' RESEARCH REPORT**

RESOLUTION NO.: 2009-D072
TITLE: Urging Participation
PROPOSER: The Very Rev. G. Thomas Luck
COMMITTEE: World Mission

Directly Related: (attached)

2006-A167 Reaffirm Church Membership of Gay and Lesbian Persons
2006-B033 Exercise Restraint in Consecrating Candidates
2003-A111 Revise Title III Canons
2003-C051 Consider Blessing Committed, Same-Gender Relationships
2000-C008 Continue Dialogue on Human Sexuality
2000-D039 Acknowledge Relationships Other Than Marriage and Existence of Disagreement on the Church's Teaching
1997-C002 On the Topic of Rites for the Blessing of Same-Sex Relationships (Rejected)
1997-C003 Affirm Traditional Marriage and Request Study of Same-Sex Relationships
1997-D011 Apologize for the Church's Rejection of Gays and Lesbians
1994-B012 Authorize Appointment of a Committee on Dialogue on Human Sexuality
1994-B101 Pastoral Study Document on Sexuality
1994-C042 Prepare Report Considering Rites for Same-Sex Commitments
1991-A104 Affirm the Church's Teaching on Sexual Expression, Commission Congregational Dialogue, and Direct Bishops to Prepare a Pastoral Teaching
1991-D176 Deploy Monogamous Homosexual Priests Within Limitations (Rejected)
1988-D117 On the Topic of the Church of England's 1987 Resolution on Sexuality (Rejected)
1988-D120 Urge Local Discussion and Report on Human Sexuality
1979-A053 Recommend Guidelines on the Ordination of Homosexuals
1976-A068 Recommend That the Church Study Aspects of Human Sexuality

Indirectly Related:

1991-D049 Acknowledge and Reexamine Church's Attitudes About Sexuality

In preparing this report, the Archives researched the resolutions of General Convention for the period 1976 through 2006, selecting "direct" resolutions that have a substantive bearing on the proposed legislation. Committee members who are interested in obtaining copies of "indirectly related" resolutions, legislative history before 1976, or who require other research assistance should contact the Archives at 800-525-9329 before Convention or at Convention in the General Convention Secretariat.



Resolution Number: 2006-A167
Title: Reaffirm Church Membership of Gay and Lesbian Persons
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 75th General Convention of The Episcopal Church reaffirm that gay and lesbian persons are by Baptism full members of the Body of Christ and of The Episcopal Church as “children of God who have a full and equal claim with all other persons upon the love, acceptance, and pastoral concern and care of the Church” (GC1976–A069); and be it further

Resolved, That the 75th General Convention reiterate its apology “on behalf of The Episcopal Church to its members who are gay or lesbian, and to lesbians and gay men outside the Church, for years of rejection and maltreatment by the Church,” and recommit to “seek amendment of our life together as we ask God’s help in sharing the Good News with all people” (GC1997–D011); and be it further

Resolved, That, in evidence of that apology, The Episcopal Church pledge to include openly gay and lesbian persons on every committee, commission or task force developed for the specific purpose of discussing issues about sexuality and request the same of our sister churches in the Anglican Communion and Anglican Communion bodies; and be it further

Resolved, That the 75th General Convention reiterate that “our baptism into Jesus Christ is inseparable from our communion with one another, and we commit ourselves to that communion despite our diversity of opinion and, among dioceses, a diversity of pastoral practice with the gay men and lesbians among us” (GC2003–C051).

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Columbus, 2006* (New York: General Convention, 2007), pp. 669-670.



Resolution Number: 2006-B033
Title: Exercise Restraint in Consecrating Candidates
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 75th General Convention receive and embrace The Windsor Report's invitation to engage in a process of healing and reconciliation; and be it further
Resolved, That this Convention therefore call upon Standing Committees and bishops with jurisdiction to exercise restraint by not consenting to the consecration of any candidate to the episcopate whose manner of life presents a challenge to the wider church and will lead to further strains on communion.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Columbus, 2006* (New York: General Convention, 2007), pp. 650-653.



Resolution Number: 2003-A111
Title: Revise Title III Canons
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Substituted
Final Text:

[*Resolved*, That Canons III.1 and III.2 are amended to read as follows.]

CANON 1: Of the Ministry of All Baptized Persons

Sec.1. Each Diocese shall make provision for the affirmation and development of the ministry of all baptized persons, including:

- (a) Assistance in understanding that all baptized persons are called to minister in Christ's name, to identify their gifts with the help of the Church and to serve Christ's mission at all times and in all places.
- (b) Assistance in understanding that all baptized persons are called to sustain their ministries through commitment to life-long Christian formation.

Sec. 2. No person shall be denied access to the discernment process for any ministry, lay or ordained, in this Church because of race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, disabilities, or age, except as otherwise provided by these Canons. No right to licensing, ordination, or election is hereby established.

CANON 2: Commissions on Ministry

Sec. 1. In each Diocese there shall be a Commission on Ministry ("Commission") consisting of Priests, Deacons, if any, and Lay Persons. The Canons of each Diocese shall provide for the number of members, terms of office, and manner of selection to the Commission.

Sec. 2. The Commission shall advise and assist the Bishop:

- (a) In the implementation of Title III of these Canons.
- (b) In the determination of present and future opportunities and needs for the ministry of all baptized persons.
- (c) In the design and oversight of the ongoing process for discernment, formation for ministry and assessment of readiness therefor.

Sec. 3. The Commission may adopt rules for its work, subject to the approval of the Bishop; Provided that they are not inconsistent with the Constitution and Canons of this Church and of the Diocese.

Sec. 4 The Commission may establish committees consisting of members and other persons to report to the Commission or to act on its behalf.

Sec. 5 The Bishop and Commission shall ensure that the members of the Commission and its committees receive ongoing education and training for their work.

Citation: Canon III.1 and 2 are excerpted from the Final Text of the revision to Canons Title III. See General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Minneapolis, 2003* (New York: General Convention, 2004), pp. 641-667.



Resolution Number: 2003-C051
Title: Consider Blessing Committed, Same-Gender Relationships
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Substituted and Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 74th General Convention affirm the following:

1. **That our life together as a community of faith is grounded in the saving work of Jesus Christ and expressed in the principles of the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral: Holy Scripture, the historic Creeds of the Church, the two dominical Sacraments, and the Historic Episcopate.**
2. **That we reaffirm Resolution A069 of the 65th General Convention (1976) that "homosexual persons are children of God who have a full and equal claim with all other persons upon the love, acceptance, and pastoral concern and care of the Church."**
3. **That, in our understanding of homosexual persons, differences exist among us about how best to care pastorally for those who intend to live in monogamous, non-celibate unions; and what is, or should be, required, permitted, or prohibited by the doctrine, discipline, and worship of The Episcopal Church concerning the blessing of the same.**
4. **That we reaffirm Resolution D039 of the 73rd General Convention (2000), that "We expect such relationships will be characterized by fidelity, monogamy, mutual affection and respect, careful, honest communication, and the holy love which enables those in such relationships to see in each other the image of God," and that such relationships exist throughout the church.**
5. **That we recognize that local faith communities are operating within the bounds of our common life as they explore and experience liturgies celebrating and blessing same-sex unions.**
6. **That we commit ourselves, and call our church, in the spirit of Resolution A104 of the 70th General Convention (1991), to continued prayer, study, and discernment on the pastoral care for gay and lesbian persons, to include the compilation and development by a special commission organized and appointed by the Presiding Bishop, of resources to facilitate as wide a conversation of discernment as possible throughout the church.**
7. **That our baptism into Jesus Christ is inseparable from our communion with one another, and we commit ourselves to that communion despite our diversity of opinion and, among dioceses, a diversity of pastoral practice with the gay men and lesbians among us.**
8. **That it is a matter of faith that our Lord longs for our unity as his disciples, and for us this entails living within the boundaries of the Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church. We believe this discipline expresses faithfulness to our polity and that it will facilitate the conversation we seek, not only in The Episcopal Church, but also in the wider Anglican Communion and beyond.**

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Minneapolis, 2003* (New York: General Convention, 2004), p. 615f.



Resolution Number: 2000-C008
Title: Continue Dialogue on Human Sexuality
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That we, the members of the 73rd General Convention of the Episcopal Church, commit ourselves to continue the process of mutual sharing, study, and discernment concerning human sexuality, so that we remain open and connected to one another despite our differences, and so we can permit the Holy Spirit to act in our midst.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Denver, 2000* (New York: General Convention, 2001), p. 244.



Resolution Number: 2000-D039
Title: Acknowledge Relationships Other Than Marriage and Existence of Disagreement on the Church's Teaching
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Substituted and Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the members of the 73rd General Convention intend for this Church to provide a safe and just structure in which all can utilize their gifts and creative energies for mission; and be it further Resolved, That we acknowledge that while the issues of human sexuality are not yet resolved, there are currently couples in the Body of Christ and in this Church who are living in marriage and couples in the Body of Christ and in this Church who are living in other life-long committed relationships; and be it further

Resolved, That we expect such relationships will be characterized by fidelity, monogamy, mutual affection and respect, careful, honest communication, and the holy love which enables those in such relationships to see in each other the image of God; and be it further

Resolved, That we denounce promiscuity, exploitation, and abusiveness in the relationships of any of our members; and be it further

Resolved, That this Church intends to hold all its members accountable to these values, and will provide for them the prayerful support, encouragement, and pastoral care necessary to live faithfully by them; and be it further

Resolved, That we acknowledge that some, acting in good conscience, who disagree with the traditional teaching of the Church on human sexuality, will act in contradiction to that position; and be it further

Resolved, That in continuity with previous actions of the General Convention of this Church, and in response to the call for dialogue by the Lambeth Conference, we affirm that those on various sides of controversial issues have a place in the Church, and we reaffirm the imperative to promote conversation between persons of differing experiences and perspectives, while acknowledging the Church's teaching on the sanctity of marriage.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Denver, 2000* (New York: General Convention, 2001), p. 287f.



Resolution Number: 1997-C002

Title: On the Topic of Rites for the Blessing of Same-Sex Relationships

Legislative Action Taken: Rejected

Text of the Resolution:

Resolved, the House of Bishops concurring, That this 72nd General Convention direct the Standing Liturgical Commission to develop, after critical study of pertinent rites already in use by faith communities, a rite or rites for the blessing of committed relationships between persons of the same sex, and to present such forms to the 73rd General Convention for inclusion in *The Book of Occasional Services*.



Resolution Number: 1997-C003
Title: Affirm Traditional Marriage and Request Study of Same-Sex Relationships
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Substituted
Final Text:

Resolved, That this 72nd General Convention affirm the sacredness of Christian marriage between one man and one woman with intent of life-long relationship; and be it further
Resolved, That this Convention direct the Standing Liturgical Commission to continue its study of theological aspects of committed relationships of same-sex couples, and to issue a full report including recommendations of future steps for the resolution of issues related to such committed relationships no later than November 1999 for consideration at the 73rd General Convention.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Philadelphia, 1997* (New York: General Convention, 1998), p. 781.



Resolution Number: 1997-D011
Title: Apologize for the Church's Rejection of Gays and Lesbians
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred As Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That, while acknowledging the diversity of opinion among the Bishops and Deputies of this Convention on the morality of gay and lesbian sexual relationships, the 72nd General Convention apologize on behalf of the Episcopal Church to its members who are gay or lesbian, and to lesbians and gay men outside the Church, for years of rejection and maltreatment by the Church; and be it further

Resolved, That this Church shall seek amendment of our life together as we ask God's help in sharing the Good News with all people.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Philadelphia, 1997* (New York: General Convention, 1998), p. 278.



Resolution Number: 1994-B012
Title: Authorize Appointment of a Committee on Dialogue on Human Sexuality
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred As Amended
Final Text:

*Resolved, the House of Bishops concurring, That the Bishops and Deputies to this General Convention work to establish within their respective jurisdictions the means to encourage and enable the widest possible study and conversation on *Continuing the Dialogue: A Pastoral Study Document of the House of Bishops to the Church as the Church Considers Issues of Human Sexuality* ; and be it further*

Resolved, That a national Committee on Dialogue on Human Sexuality composed of twelve members of this Convention with competency and skills in education be appointed by the chairs of the two Houses, four members of the House of Bishops and eight members of the House of Deputies (two clerical and six lay Deputies), persons of varying points of view, to enable continuing dialogue by providing a variety of resources as it may deem appropriate, by providing training for dialogue leaders, by maintaining contact with the several dioceses, and by keeping the dioceses and provinces informed of dialogue in process throughout the Church, reporting to the 72nd General Convention; and be it further

Resolved, That this Church commit itself to dialogue in faith, with no expectation of uniformity, but every expectation of unity; and be it further

Resolved, That the national Committee on Dialogue encourage conversation on the issues of human sexuality with both Anglican and ecumenical partners open to such communication at national, diocesan and local levels; and be it further

Resolved, That this General Convention appropriate \$70,000 to support the work of the Committee on Dialogue through the coming triennium, subject to funding in the budget.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Indianapolis, 1994* (New York: General Convention, 1995), p. 315.



Resolution Number: 1994-B101
Title: Pastoral Study Document on Sexuality
Legislative Action Taken: Adopted
Final Text:

*Resolved, That the House of Bishops, affirming the teaching of the Church that the normative context for sexual intimacy is lifelong, heterosexual, monogamous marriage, and pursuing our Anglican tradition of historic truth encountering contemporary life, offers *Continuing the Dialogue: A Pastoral Study Document of the House of Bishops to the Church as the Church Considers Issues of Human Sexuality* to the Church as a way for the Church to continue the dialogue on human sexuality; and be it further*

Resolved, That the two statements, "An Affirmation" and "An Affirmation in Koinonia," not be an official part of the House of Bishops' Pastoral Study Document on human sexuality; the statements are to be made a part of the minutes with names of signatories attached, but not distributed with the study document.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Indianapolis, 1994* (New York: General Convention, 1995), pp. 141-42.



Resolution Number: 1994-C042
Title: Prepare Report Considering Rites for Same-Sex Commitments
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred As Substituted and Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, the House of Deputies concurring, That the 71st General Convention direct the Standing Liturgical Commission and the Theology Committee of the House of Bishops to prepare and present to the 72nd General Convention, as part of the Church's ongoing dialogue on human sexuality, a report addressing the theological foundations and pastoral considerations involved in the development of rites honoring love and commitment between persons of the same sex; and be it further
Resolved, That no rites for the honoring of love and commitment between persons of the same sex be developed unless and until the preparation of such rites has been authorized by the General Convention; and be it further
Resolved, That the sum of \$8,600 be appropriated to support this work, subject to funding considerations.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Indianapolis, 1994* (New York: General Convention, 1995), p. 819.



Resolution Number: 1991-A104
Title: Affirm the Church's Teaching on Sexual Expression, Commission Congregational Dialogue, and Direct Bishops to Prepare a Pastoral Teaching
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred As Substituted and Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, the House of Deputies concurring, **That the 70th General Convention of the Episcopal Church affirms that the teaching of the Episcopal Church is that physical sexual expression is appropriate only within the lifelong monogamous "union of husband and wife in heart, body, and mind" "intended by God for their mutual joy; for the help and comfort given one another in prosperity and adversity and, when it is God's will, for the procreation of children and their nurture in the knowledge and love of the Lord" as set forth in the Book of Common Prayer; and be it further**

Resolved, **That this Church continues to work to reconcile the discontinuity between this teaching and the experience of many members of this body; and be it further**

Resolved, **That this General Convention confesses our failure to lead and to resolve this discontinuity through legislative efforts based upon resolutions directed at singular and various aspects of these issues; and be it further**

Resolved, **That this General Convention commissions the Bishops and members of each Diocesan Deputation to initiate a means for all congregations in their jurisdiction to enter into dialogue and deepen their understanding of these complex issues; and further this General Convention directs the President of each Province to appoint one Bishop, one lay deputy and one clerical deputy in that province to facilitate the process, to receive reports from the dioceses at each meeting of their provincial synod and report to the 71st General Convention; and be it further**

Resolved, **That this General Convention directs the House of Bishops to prepare a Pastoral Teaching prior to the 71st General Convention using the learnings from the diocesan and provincial processes and calling upon such insight as is necessary from theologians, theological ethicists, social scientists and gay and lesbian persons; and that three lay persons and three members of the clergy from the House of Deputies, appointed by the President of the House of Deputies be included in the preparation of this Pastoral Teaching.**

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Phoenix, 1991* (New York: General Convention, 1992), p. 746.



Resolution Number: 1991-D176
Title: Deploy Monogamous Homosexual Priests Within Limitations
Legislative Action Taken: Rejected
Text of the Resolution:

Resolved, the House of Deputies concurring, That persons in monogamous faithful homosexual relationships, ordained to the priesthood under Title III, Canon 7 of the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church in disregard of the advice of the General Convention which declared inappropriate the ordination to the priesthood of practicing homosexuals, be deployed only within the limitations set forth in Title III Canon 9, for local priests, until such time as General Convention shall cease to designate such ordinations as inappropriate.



Resolution Number: 1988-D117
Title: On the Topic of the Church of England's 1987 Resolution on Sexuality
Legislative Action Taken: Rejected
Text of the Resolution:

Resolved, the House of Deputies concurring, That the 69th General Convention of the Episcopal Church adopt as its own the following resolution of the November, 1987 General Synod of the Church of England:

"This Synod affirms that the biblical and traditional teaching on chastity and fidelity in personal relationships is a response to, and expression of, God's love for each one of us, and in particular affirms:

1. that sexual intercourse is an act of total commitment which belongs properly within a permanent marriage relationship;
2. that fornication and adultery are sins against this ideal, and are to be met by a call to repentance and the exercise of compassion;
3. that homosexual genital acts also fall short of this ideal, and are likewise to be met by a call to repentance and the exercise of compassion;
4. that all Christians are called to be exemplary in all spheres of morality, including sexual morality, and that holiness of life is particularly required for Christian leaders."



Resolution Number: 1988-D120
Title: Urge Local Discussion and Report on Human Sexuality
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred As Substituted and Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, the House of Deputies concurring, **That this 69th General Convention affirm that the Biblical and traditional teaching on chastity and fidelity in personal relationships is a response to, and an expression of, God's love for each one of us; and that all Christians are called to be exemplary in all spheres of morality, including sexual morality; and that holiness in life is particularly required of Christian leaders. In this context; and be it further**

Resolved, **That this Convention, responsive to the call of the Standing Commission on Human Affairs and Health "to find a non-judgmental occasion to listen and talk," and in the spirit of the Presiding Bishop's statement that "there will be no outcasts in this Church," strongly urge each diocese and congregation to provide opportunities for open dialogue on human sexuality, in which we, as members of this Church, both heterosexual and homosexual, may study, pray, listen to and share our convictions and concerns, our search for stable, loving and committed relationships, and our journey toward wholeness and holiness; and be it further**

Resolved, **That the accepted sources of authority for Christians, namely Scripture, tradition, reason and experience, supplemented by the 1976, 1979, 1982 and 1985 statements from the General Convention on human sexuality, the resolution adopted by the General Synod of the Church of England in November, 1987, and the 1988 report of the Standing Commission on Human Affairs and Health, and ongoing scientific research be commended for use in this dialogue; and be it further**

Resolved, **That each diocese report its finding and experiences to the Standing Commission on Human Affairs and Health no later than December 1990 and that the Standing Commission evaluate the reports and produce a composite report for presentation to the 70th General Convention.**

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Detroit, 1988* (New York: General Convention, 1989), p. 296.



Resolution Number: 1979-A053
Title: Recommend Guidelines on the Ordination of Homosexuals
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred As Substituted and Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, the House of Deputies concurring, **That the 66th General Convention receive with gratitude and appreciation the Report and Recommendations of its Standing Commission on Human Affairs and Health with special reference to the requested study of the matter of ordination of homosexual persons; and be it further**

Resolved, **That this General Convention recommend to Bishops, Pastors, Vestries, Commissions on Ministry and Standing Committees, the following considerations as they continue to exercise their proper canonical functions in the selection and approval of persons for ordination:**

1. **There are many human conditions, some of them in the area of sexuality, which bear upon a person's suitability for ordination;**
2. **Every ordinand is expected to lead a life which is "a wholesome example to all people" (Book of Common Prayer, pp. 517, 532, 544). There should be no barrier to the ordination of qualified persons of either heterosexual or homosexual orientation whose behavior the Church considers wholesome;**
3. **We re-affirm the traditional teaching of the Church on marriage, marital fidelity and sexual chastity as the standard of Christian sexual morality. Candidates for ordination are expected to conform to this standard. Therefore, we believe it is not appropriate for this Church to ordain a practicing homosexual, or any person who is engaged in heterosexual relations outside of marriage.**

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Denver, 1979* (New York: General Convention, 1980), p. C-93.



Resolution Number: 1976-A068
Title: Recommend That the Church Study Aspects of Human Sexuality
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred As Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, the House of Bishops concurring, **That this General Convention recommends that the dioceses and the Church in general engage in serious study and dialogue in the area of human sexuality, (including homosexuality) as it pertains to various aspects of life, particularly living styles, employment, housing, and education.**

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Minneapolis 1976* (New York: General Convention, 1977), p. C-112.

TOPIC/TITLE: Same-Sex Unions: Urging Participation

PROPOSER: The Very Rev. G. Thomas Luck

C&C PAGE:

BB PAGE:

1 *Resolved*, the House of _____ concurring, That The Episcopal Church continue to
 2 uphold the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral adopted by the Lambeth Conference of 1888:
 3 (a) The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, as "containing all things
 4 necessary to salvation," and as being the rule and ultimate standard of faith. (b) The
 5 Apostles' Creed, as the Baptismal Symbol; and the Nicene Creed, as the sufficient
 6 statement of the Christian faith. (c) The two Sacraments ordained by Christ Himself-
 7 Baptism and the Supper of the Lord-ministered with unfailling use of Christ's words of
 8 Institution, and of the elements ordained by Him. (d) The Historic Episcopate, locally
 9 adapted in the methods of its administrations to the varying needs of the nations and
 10 peoples called of God into the Unity of His Church; and be it further

11
 12 *Resolved*, That The Episcopal Church continue to uphold the Thirty-Nine Articles of
 13 Religion, which were adopted by this Church in 1801; and be it further

14
 15 *Resolved*, That in particular we look to Article XXV-Of the Sacraments, which states in
 16 part, "Those five commonly called Sacraments, that is to say, Confirmation, Penance,
 17 Orders, Matrimony, and Extreme Unction, are not to be counted for Sacraments of the
 18 Gospel, being such as have grown partly of the corrupt following of the Apostles, partly
 19 are states of life allowed in the Scriptures; but yet have not like nature of the Sacraments
 20 with Baptism, and the Lord's Supper, for that they have not any visible sign or ceremony
 21 ordained of God." (The Book of Common Prayer, 1979, p. 872); and be it further

22
 23 *Resolved*, That we also look to Article XXXIV-Of the Traditions of the Church, which
 24 states in part, "It is not necessary that Traditions and Ceremonies be in all places one, or
 25 utterly like; for at all times they have been divers, and may be changed according to the
 26 diversity of countries, times, and men's manners, so that nothing be ordained against
 27 God's Word....Every particular or national Church hath authority to ordain, change, and
 28 abolish, Ceremonies or Rites of the Church ordained only by man's authority, so that all
 29 things be done to edifying." (The Book of Common Prayer, 1979, p. 874); and be it
 30 further

31
 32 *Resolved*, That The Episcopal Church believe that the New Testament teaches that certain
 33 kinds of sexual behavior are sinful. These behaviors are sinful whether practiced by
 34 homosexuals or heterosexuals. The Episcopal Church believes that faithful,
 35 monogamous, and mutually consensual relations between persons of the same sex, with

Endorser(s): Dr. John Chaffee, The Very Rev. Christopher D. Hofer

1 the intention that these relations be life long, are not addressed in the New Testament, are
2 not condemned by it, and are consistent with a Biblical sexual ethic that requires fidelity
3 to God and one's beloved. The Episcopal Church considers such behavior to be a
4 wholesome example for the Church. Further, the Episcopal Church supports the full
5 inclusion of homosexual persons who are wholesome examples at all levels of the
6 Anglican Communion; and be it further

7
8 *Resolved*, That the discernment of The Episcopal Church is that there are no theological
9 barriers to blessing same-sex marriages where allowable by law, or same-sex domestic
10 partnerships where allowable by law, or same-sex relationships that are based on love,
11 fidelity and lifelong commitment; and be it further

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13 *Resolved*, That The Episcopal Church urge the development of public blessings of such
14 same-sex relationships by the bishop of each diocese, consistent with state law and the
15 rubric on page 13 of the Book of Common Prayer which states, "for other special
16 occasions for which no service or prayers has been provided in this Book, the bishop may
17 set forth such forms as are fitting to the occasion"; and be it further

18
19 *Resolved*, That the discernment of The Episcopal Church is that there are no theological
20 barriers to all orders of ministry in this Church being open to all qualified persons, in
21 accordance with Canons, including those who are in same-sex partnered relationships
22 based on love, fidelity and lifelong commitment; and be it further

23
24 *Resolved*, That The Episcopal Church urge those who call persons to the episcopate to
25 include, among those who are being considered, qualified persons who are in same-sex
26 relationships of love, fidelity and life-long commitment, in accordance with the Canons.

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EXPLANATION:

This resolution states the theological position of The Episcopal Church regarding the blessing of same-sex relationships and the ordination of people in same-sex relationships to the episcopate. This is helpful for the members of The Episcopal Church, the Anglican Communion, our ecumenical partners and society at large. Further, it urges the bishops of the Church to develop forms for blessing same-sex relationships in each of their dioceses in accordance with state law and the rubric of the Book of Common Prayer. Further still, it urges those who call persons to the episcopate to include, among those being considered, qualified persons who are in same-sex relationships of love, fidelity and life-long commitment, in accordance with the Canons.

Endorser(s): Dr. John Chaffee, The Very Rev. Christopher D. Hofer