

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

RESOLUTION NO.: 2009-A041
TITLE: War in Iraq
PROPOSER: Standing Commission on Anglican and International Peace with Justice Concerns
COMMITTEE: National and International Concerns

Directly Related: (attached)

2006-D019 Acknowledge Concern for Troops in Iraq and Afghanistan
2006-D020 Oppose the War in Iraq and Support Nonviolent Means to Ending Conflict
2003-A033 Urge Church Members to Study Just War Theory and Criteria
2003-D031 Develop Plans for a Culture of Nonviolence

Indirectly Related:

2003-A028 Encourage Support for Women and Children in War-Torn Areas
2000-D022 Support the UN's "Decade for a Culture of Peace and Nonviolence"
1991-B043 Appoint Representatives to a Joint Lutheran-Episcopal Coordinating Committee
1991-D135 On the Topic of the Invasion of Kuwait (Rejected)
1991-D199 On the Topic of Sanctions on Iraq (Rejected)

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-D019
Title: Acknowledge Concern for Troops in Iraq and Afghanistan
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 75th General Convention pray for the people of Iraq and Afghanistan and for all those who are working to bring peace to those lands, particularly United States military personnel and their families, relief forces from allied nations, and all civilian aid workers from the United States and other countries; and be it further

Resolved, That the Convention express its particular concern and support for all personnel serving in the military in Iraq and Afghanistan; and be it further

Resolved, That the Convention urges all Episcopalians and all congregations of The Episcopal Church to join in such prayer and support; and be it further

Resolved, That the Convention offer its thanks and gratitude to all Episcopal chaplains serving in the military for their pastoral ministries, particularly those serving in Iraq and Afghanistan; and be it further

Resolved, That the Convention direct the Office of the Bishop Suffragan for Chaplaincies to communicate to all Episcopal military chaplains and to the Episcopal service men and women in Iraq and Afghanistan these commitments of prayer, concern, support, and thanksgiving.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Columbus, 2006* (New York: General Convention, 2007), p. 344.



Resolution Number: 2006-D020
Title: Oppose the War in Iraq and Support Nonviolent Means to Ending Conflict
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 75th General Convention of The Episcopal Church affirm the conclusion of the October 1, 2002 letter of the House of Bishops to members of Congress, stating that the conditions of the “Just War” tradition have not been met in the national government’s decision to attack the nation of Iraq; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention of The Episcopal Church call upon the Congress and the President to immediately develop for implementation a plan for the stabilization of Iraq, to be followed by the prompt withdrawal of U.S. Armed Forces from Iraq, to provide for a transfer of peacekeeping functions to an international peacekeeping force, to work through international and Iraqi organizations in the reconstruction of Iraq’s civil and economic infrastructure, and for the full restoration of Iraqi sovereignty; and be it further

Resolved, That the 75th General Convention call on The Episcopal Church to acknowledge and confess that our government’s participation in the war in Iraq has resulted in individual and global injustices including passive acceptance of the loss of our military personnel, lack of support and care for those returning home, indifference to the loss of countless Iraqi citizens, silent response to atrocities, illegal confinement without representation or formal charges and torture; and be it further

Resolved, That the 75th General Convention call on The Episcopal Church to request the Ecumenical and Interfaith Officer to step-up dialogue with the Iraqi Muslim and Christian community to work toward nonviolent resolutions to conflict; and be it further

Resolved, That the 75th General Convention, as a community of faith committed to reconciliation and nonviolence taught in the gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ, direct the Presiding Bishop and the Executive Council to encourage wide use of Christian formation materials that stress nonviolent methods to conflict resolution and change; and be it further

Resolved, That the 75th General Convention request the Standing Liturgical Commission to commission prayers and liturgies to be used in time of war, and that the General Convention call on Episcopalians to honor and support, through their prayers and actions, the armed service men and women who return home with injuries to body, mind, and spirit that they might be restored to wholeness of life and assisted in recovering from injury and trauma; and be it further

Resolved, That the 75th General Convention call on all Episcopalians to honor through their prayers and actions the men and women who conscientiously serve their country and especially those who have been killed and wounded; and be it further

Resolved, That the 75th General Convention call upon all Episcopalians as an act of penitence, to oppose and resist through advocacy, protest, and electoral action the continuation of the war in Iraq, and encourage the President and Congress to take proactive steps to end our participation as soon as possible.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Columbus, 2006* (New York: General Convention, 2007), pp. 662-663.



Resolution Number: 2003-A033
Title: Urge Church Members to Study Just War Theory and Criteria
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 74th General Convention call upon all members of The Episcopal Church, in discussions about war and especially the strategy of preemptive strikes, to seriously consider and utilize the Just War criteria developed over the centuries and generally expressed as follows. First, whether lethal force may be used is governed by the following criteria:

- **Just cause:** Force may be used only to correct a grave, public evil, i.e., aggression or massive violation of the basic rights of whole populations.
- **Comparative justice:** While there may be rights and wrongs on all sides of a conflict, to override the presumption against the use of force, the injustice suffered by one part must significantly outweigh that suffered by the other.
- **Legitimate authority:** Only duly constituted public authorities may use deadly force or wage war.
- **Right intention:** Force may be used only in a truly just cause and solely for that purpose.
- **Probability of success:** Arms may not be used in a futile cause or in a case where disproportionate measures are required to achieve success.
- **Proportionality:** The overall destruction expected from the use of force must be outweighed by the good to be achieved.
- **Last resort:** Force may be used only after all peaceful alternatives have been seriously tried and exhausted.

These criteria taken as a whole must be satisfied in order to override the strong presumption against the use of force. Second, the Just War tradition seeks also to curb the violence of war through restraint on armed combat between the contending parties by imposing the following moral standards for the conduct of armed conflict:

- **Noncombatant immunity:** Civilians may not be the objects of direct attack, and military personnel must take due care to avoid and minimize indirect harm to civilians.
- **Proportionality:** In the conduct of hostilities, efforts must be made to attain military objectives with no more force than is militarily necessary and to avoid disproportionate collateral damage to civilian life and property.
- **Right intention:** Even in the midst of conflict, the aim of political and military leaders must be peace with justice, so that acts of vengeance and indiscriminate violence, whether by individuals, military units or governments, are forbidden; and be it further

Resolved, That when legitimate civilian authority determines that war is justified, members of The Episcopal Church recall our Lord's teaching to love our enemies, counsel that participation in or refusal to participate in any war is a discernment process requiring deep reflection and prayer with humility, and acknowledge that one participates in war with great reluctance, always seeking God's mercy and forgiveness; and be it further

Resolved, That the 74th General Convention, recalling the longstanding Episcopal Church view, originally adopted by the 1930 Lambeth Conference and by the 1931 General Convention, that "war as a method of settling international disputes is incompatible with the teaching and example of our Lord Jesus Christ," urge dioceses and congregations to study and better understand Just War theory and pacifism as they apply to the situation of the United States in responding to contemporary international conflicts.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Minneapolis, 2003* (New York: General Convention, 2004), p. 317f.



Resolution Number: 2003-D031
Title: Develop Plans for a Culture of Nonviolence
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That The Episcopal Church develop specific plans at national, provincial, and diocesan levels in the next triennium for the Church to live into a culture of nonviolence which values love, compassion, and justice, and which rejects violence as a means of solving problems; and be it further
Resolved, That curricula in nonviolence awareness and training be promoted for use in dioceses and congregations; and be it further
Resolved, That the results of these plans be compiled by the Office of Peace and Justice and presented to the General Convention 2006.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Minneapolis, 2003* (New York: General Convention, 2004), p. 325.

09 - National and International Concerns

A041

TOPIC/TITLE: Warfare: War in Iraq
PROPOSER: Standing Commission on Anglican and International Peace with
Justice Concerns
C&C PAGE:
BB PAGE: 100

- 1 *Resolved*, the House of _____ concurring, That the 76th General Convention reaffirm
2 Resolution D020 of the 75th General Convention in confessing that "the conditions of the 'Just
3 War' tradition have not been met in the national government's decision to attack the nation of
4 Iraq," and also confess that our nation's invasion and occupation of Iraq has resulted in individual
5 and global injustices including death and maiming of countless Iraqi innocents, displacement of
6 millions of Iraqi citizens, silent response to atrocities, illegal confinement without representation
7 or formal charges, torture, lack of support and care for military personnel returning home and the
8 opportunity costs of nearly \$600 billion spent; and be it further
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- 10 *Resolved*, That in repentance we urge all Episcopalians to support independent international relief
11 efforts such as those of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent to bring healing to this
12 deeply broken nation; and be it further
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- 14 *Resolved*, That in striving for amendment of life we urge all Episcopalians to use Christian
15 formation materials that stress nonviolent methods to conflict resolution and change; and be it
16 further
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- 18 *Resolved*, That in striving for amendment of life, we urge the President and Congress to abide by
19 the demand of the Iraqi government to withdraw all U.S. combat forces from Iraq by December
20 31, 2011; and be it further
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- 22 *Resolved*, That in striving for amendment of life we urge the President and Congress to listen to
23 and consider deeply the voices and concerns of the Iraqi people in determining our continuing
24 relationship with that sovereign nation, including the establishment of permanent U.S. bases and
25 the presence of military and non-military personnel; and be it further
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- 27 *Resolved*, That in striving for amendment of life we urge the President and Congress and our
28 entire nation to seek wisdom from sin committed in Iraq and let that wisdom inform future
29 relationships throughout the world; and be it further
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- 31 *Resolved*, That we urge all Episcopalians to honor through their prayers and actions the men and
32 women who conscientiously serve their country, some who have been killed and wounded in Iraq
33 and some who have objected to this war.
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EXPLANATION:

As Christians we follow our Lord through a process of discipleship that involves confession, repentance and amendment of life as a way to be more perfectly formed into the Body of Christ. Even sin committed with best intentions must be confessed so we may receive forgiveness and enter into the risen life of Christ. While there may be honest and faithful disagreement over whether intentions were good and sin was intended in Iraq, it is plain that sin was committed, and so our Lord calls us to confess, repent and amend our lives. We have much to confess and much we have confessed already. On October 1, 2002, the House of Bishops of The Episcopal Church sent a letter to members of Congress in which they argued that the conditions for a just war had not been met in the national government's decision to attack the nation of Iraq. Nevertheless, the Armed Forces of the United States invaded Iraq in 2003. The results of our invasion have been catastrophic. More than 4,500 members of the United States Armed Forces and Coalition Forces have been killed as part of the ongoing combat operations in Iraq. The Defense Department's official tally of U.S. wounded is more than 30,000 with many independent estimates surpassing three times that number - not counting hundreds of thousands of combat veterans returning home with some level of traumatic brain injury. There is no official reckoning of Iraqi innocents killed but independent estimates range from 90,000 to 1.3 million. In addition, according to Oxfam, "Eight million people are in urgent need of emergency aid; that figure includes over two million who are displaced within the country, and more than two million refugees. Many more are living in poverty, without basic services, and increasingly threatened by disease and malnutrition." Sin is sin. But even if the most conservative estimates are to be believed, the scope of the death, destruction and displacement that have occurred during our invasion and occupation of Iraq is so vast and the brokenness rendered so deep that the repentance needs to be of similar depth and guided by the will of the people whom we have wronged. The best indicator we have of the will of the Iraqi people is the Status of Forces Agreement passed by the government of Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki demanding that all US troops in the country be withdrawn from Iraqi cities and towns by June 30, 2009, and from all of Iraq by December 31, 2011. Repentance and amendment of life begins with complying with this demand but does not end there. We must seek out, listen to and deeply consider the will of the Iraqi people in considering our future relationship with that nation, particularly as it pertains to any permanent American presence on Iraqi soil. If we are truly to be penitent and follow Christ's call to amend our lives in the face of our sin, we must commit to such listening and being guided by the will of sovereign peoples in all our relationships around the world.