

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

RESOLUTION NO.: 2009-A067
TITLE: Strategy for Establishing New Congregations
PROPOSER: Standing Commission on Domestic Mission and Evangelism
COMMITTEE: Evangelism

Directly Related: (attached)

2006-A042 Establish a Church Planting Initiative
2003-A073 Develop Practices for Church Planting
1997-A085 Urge Dioceses to Prepare Strategies for Congregational Development

Indirectly Related:

1994-D110 Authorize the Establishment of the Plant-A-Church Fund for Evangelism
1991-A074 Commend Ecumenical Collaboration in Evangelism
1991-D106 Establish 1000 New Congregations by the Year 2000
1985-A057 Direct Church Representatives to Advocate the Lutheran-Episcopal Statement on Ministry

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-A042
Title: Establish a Church Planting Initiative
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Substituted and Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 75th General Convention establish a Church Planting Initiative to raise funds for new congregations in the dioceses of this Church; and be it further

Resolved, That the 75th General Convention call every diocese of this Church to identify and document with projected costs and demographics including racial, ethnic, generational, and socioeconomic makeup of the targeted areas, prime opportunities for the development of new congregations including new college campus missions, and communicate this list of opportunities to the Office of Congregational Development by June 30, 2007; and be it further

Resolved, That the Office of Congregational Development be directed to assemble these reports by December 30, 2007, and convey to Executive Council, in its regular report a comprehensive list of opportunities for new church and campus ministry development and projected costs, and to communicate this list through electronic and print media to the Church; and be it further

Resolved, That upon receipt of the comprehensive report for New Church Development the Presiding Bishop and the Executive Council implement a major gifts campaign to fund the Church Planting Initiative; and be it further

Resolved, That the Office of Congregational Development in cooperation with the Ethnic Ministries offices, especially the Hispanic Ministries Office, lead and support the Church Planting Initiative by: keeping the church abreast of best practices for church, campus mission and ministry planting; raising awareness of opportunities for starting new congregations, campus mission and ministries throughout the church; assisting individual dioceses in planning and developing a vision and a plan for this Initiative; developing tools for assessing candidates for new church development; and recommending matching grants for church planting; and be it further

Resolved, That The Episcopal Church be a financial partner with dioceses by providing matching grants to dioceses for church planting; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention direct the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget, and Finance to consider the Church Planting Initiative budget for development staff to identify and nurture new sources of revenue in the grants, gifts, endowments and/or capital fund drives be increased from \$75,000 to \$475,000 during each year of the 2007–2009 triennium.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Columbus, 2006* (New York: General Convention, 2007), pp. 655-656.



Resolution Number: 2003-A073
Title: Develop Practices for Church Planting
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 74th General Convention direct the Congregational Development Unit of the Episcopal Church Center to:

- **develop a system for identifying persons with the skills and temperament to plant new churches and/or revitalize existing congregations;**
- **in cooperation with the Office on Ministry Development, develop and recommend practices for recruiting, training, deploying, and retaining such persons;**
- **develop and carry out events to include an annual national conference of church planters to share stories and resources;**
- **develop training and mentoring programs for laypersons and congregations involved in church planting;**
- **through the office of the Director of Research at the Episcopal Church Center, conduct and fund research into how other denominations plant and sustain new churches, with special emphasis on learning best practices for planting churches in less affluent areas or areas with negative population growth;**
- **and make an annual report to the Executive Council and The Episcopal Church at-large on the net increase in new church starts; and be it further**

Resolved, That we commend the work already begun by the Congregational Development Unit of the Episcopal Church Center.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Minneapolis, 2003* (New York: General Convention, 2004), p. 312f.



Resolution Number: 1997-A085
Title: Urge Dioceses to Prepare Strategies for Congregational Development
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That this 72nd General Convention urge and encourage dioceses with metropolitan areas to prepare overall and intentional strategies for congregational development that:

- foster networks with other dioceses, within dioceses themselves, and with ecumenical entities, to learn, reflect and build on mutual experiences;
- utilize effective resources and organization for congregational leadership development;
- discover and affirm existing models of faithful and effective congregational ministries, including the Jubilee Ministries model; and
- commit to the regard for and inclusion of the racial and ethnic diversity represented by communities and individuals within metropolitan areas.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Philadelphia, 1997* (New York: General Convention, 1998), p. 61.

12 - Evangelism

A067

TOPIC/TITLE: Congregations: Strategy for Establishing New Congregations
PROPOSER: Standing Commission on Domestic Mission and Evangelism
C&C PAGE:
BB PAGE: 127

- 1 *Resolved*, the House of _____ concurring, That the 76th General Convention encourage the
- 2 staff officer for New and Emerging Churches in the Evangelism and Congregational Life Center
- 3 to collaborate with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and others to develop resources
- 4 for starting new congregations; and be it further
- 5
- 6 *Resolved*, That these resources include case studies, best practices, approaches to be avoided and
- 7 effective action plans for starting and sustaining new congregations; and be it further
- 8
- 9 *Resolved*, That this resource be published and presented to the Executive Council and to the
- 10 House of Bishops at their first meeting in 2011.
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EXPLANATION:

Even in the face of decline there are opportunities for mission and church plants, and we need to be prepared to act when the Spirit calls and the opportunity arises. Mission-oriented Christian leaders in many traditions have learned how to successfully plant and sustain new churches. Resources need to be gathered and made accessible to bishops who would live into their calling as chief evangelist by establishing new congregations.