

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

RESOLUTION NO.: 2009-A064
TITLE: Amend Canon III.4.1(a) and Add Canon III.4.9
PROPOSER: Standing Commission on Domestic Mission and Evangelism
COMMITTEE: Ministry

Directly Related: (attached)

2003-A111 Revise Title III Canons
1991-A076 Commend Evangelists and Ministries of Evangelism
1988-A062 On the Topic of the Canons on Lay Persons to be Licensed by the Bishop and on Lay Evangelists (Rejected)

Indirectly Related:

2006-A037 Reaffirm Commitment to Congregational Health and Evangelism
1991-D012 Commend Evangelism Efforts of Individuals and Organizations

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

[*Resolved*, That Canon III.1 is 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.

Citation: Canon III.1 is 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: 1991-A076
Title: Commend Evangelists and Ministries of Evangelism
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred As Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, the House of Deputies concurring, **That the 70th General Convention of the Episcopal Church commend those gifted members of our Communion who are called to exercise the ministry of evangelism in preaching, teaching, conference leadership and the media;** and be it further
Resolved, **That we commend special ministries dedicated to encouraging, training and deployment of lay persons for the work of evangelism.**

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Phoenix, 1991* (New York: General Convention, 1992), p. 810.



Resolution Number: 1988-A062
Title: On the Topic of the Canons on Lay Persons to be Licensed by the Bishop and on Lay Evangelists
Legislative Action Taken: Rejected
Text of the Resolution:

Resolved, the House of Bishops concurring, That

1. Title III, Canon 2, Sec. 1 be amended to read as follows:

Sec. 1. A confirmed adult communicant in good standing, committed and prepared to serve the Church as Lay Reader, Lay Preacher, *Lay Evangelist*, or Catechist, may be licensed to this ministry by the Bishop or Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese in which the person is canonically resident. Guidelines for training and selection of such persons shall be established by the Ordinary of the Diocese and include provisions of Secs. 3-6 below, as applicable.

2. Title III, Canon 2, be amended by adding Sec. 8. as follows:

Sec. 8. A Lay Evangelist is a person licensed to lead in and train others for evangelism ministries in congregations. Prior to licensing, the Lay Evangelist shall be trained, examined and found competent in the following subjects:

- (a) The Holy Scriptures, contents and background;*
- (b) Missiology;*
- (c) Christian initiation;*
- (d) Apologetics;*
- (e) Use of the voice;*
- (f) Use of the mass media; and*
- (g) Interpersonal communications.*

TOPIC/TITLE: Canons: Amend Canon III.4.1(a) and Add Canon III.4.9
 PROPOSER: Standing Commission on Domestic Mission and Evangelism
 C&C PAGE: 64
 BB PAGE: 125

1 *Resolved*, the House of _____ concurring, That Canon III.4.1(a) is hereby amended to read
 2 as follows:
 3 Sec. 1. (a) A confirmed communicant in good standing or, in extraordinary circumstances,
 4 subject to guidelines established by the Bishop, a communicant in good standing, may be
 5 licensed by the Ecclesiastical Authority to serve as Pastoral Leader, Worship Leader,
 6 Preacher, Eucharistic Minister, Eucharistic Visitor, *Evangelist*, or Catechist. Requirements
 7 and guidelines for the selection, training, continuing education, and deployment of such
 8 persons, and the duration of licenses shall be established by the Bishop in consultation with
 9 the Commission on Ministry; and be it further
 10
 11 *Resolved*, That Canon III.4.9 is hereby added as follows:
 12 Sec. 9. *An Evangelist is a lay person with an extraordinary gift for presenting the good news*
 13 *of Jesus Christ in such a way that people decide to follow him, join the body of Christ and*
 14 *share his mission. An Evangelist assists with the community's ministry of evangelism in*
 15 *partnership with the Presbyter or other leader exercising oversight of the congregation, or as*
 16 *directed by the Bishop.*
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EXPLANATION:

We are all called to be evangelists of the good news of God in Christ, and the Holy Spirit gives this gift in extraordinary measure to some. By adding "Evangelist" to The Episcopal Church's licensed lay leaders we lift up and celebrate those whose unique gifts particularly inspire, encourage and lead the community toward bolder proclamation of the good news. In accordance with the Canons, each diocese will be responsible for designing locally-appropriate trainings, processes for identifying potential evangelists and ensuring continuing education and a regular recertification process.