

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

RESOLUTION NO.: 2009-D055
TITLE: Reaffirm Tithe as Minimum Standard
PROPOSER: Mr. Albert T. Mollegan Jr.
COMMITTEE: Stewardship and Development

Directly Related: (attached)

2003-A135 Encourage All Members of the Church to Develop a Personal Spiritual Discipline
2003-A138 Urge Congregations and Dioceses to Adopt the Principle of 50/50 Sharing
2000-A106 Adopt the Stewardship Statement and Affirm Tithing
2000-C005 On the Topic of Funding the National Church Through a Diocesan Tithe (Rejected)
1997-A138 Affirm the Tithe As the Minimum Standard of Giving
1997-A140 Call on Congregations to Give Resources to the Care of Their Neighbors
1994-A120 Reaffirm the Tithe As the Minimum Standard of Giving
1991-A187 On the Topic of Tithes and Bequests (Rejected)
1991-A188 Reaffirm Resolution on 50/50 Giving and Publish Level of Diocesan and Congregational Giving
1991-A189 Reaffirm Resolution on Financial Pledging
1988-A164 Affirm the Tithe As the Standard of Giving and Signify by Signatures
1988-D144 Encourage Dioceses and Congregations Towards the Goal of 50/50 Giving
1988-D165 Urge Each Household to Make a Financial Pledge
1982-A116 Affirm the Tithe As the Standard of Giving

Indirectly Related:

1997-A066 Develop Educational Program on Planned Giving and Tithe
1985-A148 Study the Funding System and Voluntary Percentage Giving
1985-D140 Encourage Congregations to Accept the Practice of Giving to Others

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-A135
Title: Encourage All Members of the Church to Develop a Personal Spiritual Discipline
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That in recognition of the church's tradition of calling us to work, pray, and give for the spread of God's kingdom, all members of The Episcopal Church be encouraged to develop a personal spiritual discipline that includes, at a minimum, the holy habits of tithing, daily personal prayer and study, Sabbath time, and weekly corporate worship; and be it further

Resolved, That the Bishops and Deputies of the 74th General Convention be given an opportunity to sign the following declaration:

As Christian stewards and leaders of The Episcopal Church, we affirm that we are tithing, or have adopted a plan to work toward tithing as a minimum standard for our giving; and that, if we are not already doing so, we are committed to give priority to corporate worship, personal daily prayer and study, and Sabbath time in our own lives; and we invite all members of The Episcopal Church to join us in these holy habits; and be it further

Resolved, That we commit ourselves to present this declaration to our diocesan conventions for adoption and signature, and in turn to the vestries and people of our parishes, missions, and university centers; and be it further

*Resolved, That the Secretary publish a list of the General Convention signatories in the Journal of the 74th General Convention and provide the same to *Episcopal Life* for publication of the statement and the list of signatories.*

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Minneapolis, 2003* (New York: General Convention, 2004), p. 588f



Resolution Number: 2003-A138
Title: Urge Congregations and Dioceses to Adopt the Principle of 50/50 Sharing
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 74th General Convention urge congregations to adopt the principle of devoting as much of their resources of time, talent, and treasure outside of the congregation as on itself. Part of the 50/50 sharing should include adoption of the 1% giving to seminaries, the .7% giving to international development programs that address root causes of ill health, illiteracy, and economic justice, and other worthwhile causes; and be it further

Resolved, That each diocese be urged to adopt the principle of 50/50 sharing of its resources on the same basis as congregations through budgetary allocation for outreach, aided congregations, support to the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society and other mission efforts beyond diocesan administrative commitments, and then to establish a 3-year plan to move toward the accomplishment of that 50/50 sharing goal.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Minneapolis, 2003* (New York: General Convention, 2004), p. 589.



Resolution Number: 2000-A106
Title: Adopt the Stewardship Statement and Affirm Tithing
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Submitted
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 73rd General Convention of the Episcopal Church adopt the following Stewardship Statement of the Standing Commission on Stewardship and Development to be its own:

STEWARDSHIP STATEMENT

We believe... We are the children of God, and we need to give. In every aspect of our lives we are entrusted to be stewards of God's creation. God invites us to give freely and to exercise joyfully our gifts through mission and ministry.

We commit ourselves... To boldly claim God's abundant provision in our lives; to offer extravagantly our time, talent, and money to do God's work; and to practice tithing as a minimum standard of giving.

We challenge members of the Episcopal Church... To confront our fears of scarcity; to embrace a new vision of stewardship through a joyful response to God's extravagant gifts; and to empower the mission of Christ through generous giving.

We invite... Leadership groups in dioceses and congregations to develop their own stewardship statements in order to promote response to the gospel;

and be it further

Resolved, That we, the Deputies and Bishops of this Convention, give thanks to God for those who embrace tithing as a faithful individual response to the grace of God; and do hereby affirm through our signatures these professed beliefs and practices; and be it further
Resolved, That the Secretary be directed to collect the signatures with this resolution and publish the list of signatures in the Journal.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Denver, 2000* (New York: General Convention, 2001), p. 443.



Resolution Number: 2000-C005
Title: On the Topic of Funding the National Church Through a Diocesan Tithe
Legislative Action Taken: Rejected
Text of the Resolution:

Resolved, the House of Bishops concurring, That the 73rd General Convention initiate the process by which the Church at the National level is funded by apportioning a tithe upon the income of the several dioceses thereof; and be it further

Resolved, That this General Convention direct the appropriate standing commission to develop the process and procedures by which this action can be accomplished; and be it further

Resolved, That realizing such a substantive change will require a period of time for conversation, we recommend that the process be presented to the General Convention of 2003, and the implementation be completed by the General Convention of 2009.



Resolution Number: 1997-A138
Title: Affirm the Tithe As the Minimum Standard of Giving
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred As Substituted and Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That this 72nd General Convention of the Episcopal Church affirm the tithe as the minimum standard of individual giving for Episcopalians; and be it further

Resolved, That we the Deputies and Bishops of this Convention do hereby affirm through our signatures that we are tithing, or that we have adopted, or will adopt, a plan to tithe within the next three years; and be it further

Resolved, That we call each diocese, congregation and individual of this Church to join us in accepting and teaching the tithe as the minimum standard of individual Christian giving; and be it further

Resolved, That each diocese and congregation engage in a process to adopt its own stewardship statement affirming the tithe as the minimum standard of individual Christian giving; and be it further

Resolved, That the Standing Commission on Stewardship and Development report to the 73rd General Convention the results of the processes in the Dioceses and Congregations so that the models may be shared Church wide; and be it further

Resolved, That the Secretary of the Convention be directed to distribute signatory pages for Bishops and Deputies of each diocese signifying their commitment to the tithe as the minimum standard of individual Christian giving; and be it further

Resolved, That the Secretary be directed to collect the signatures with this resolution and publish the list of signatures in the Journal.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Philadelphia, 1997* (New York: General Convention, 1998), p. 163.



Resolution Number: 1997-A140
Title: Call on Congregations to Give Resources to the Care of Their Neighbors
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Substituted
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 72nd General Convention of the Episcopal Church call on all congregations to develop consistent strategies of giving of time, talent and treasure for the care, concern and nurture of their neighbors; and to allocate for that mission and ministry an extravagance of resources which faithfully reflects the extravagance of God's grace in our lives.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Philadelphia, 1997* (New York: General Convention, 1998), p. 91.



Resolution Number: 1994-A120
Title: Reaffirm the Tithes As the Minimum Standard of Giving
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred As Submitted
Final Text:

Resolved, the House of Bishops concurring, **That this 71st General Convention of the Episcopal Church affirms the tithes as the minimum standard of giving for Episcopalians;** and be it further

Resolved, **That we the Deputies and Bishops of this Convention do hereby affirm through our signatures that we are tithing, or that we have adopted, or will adopt, a plan to tithe within the next three years;** and be it further

Resolved, **That we call all members of this Church to join us in accepting the tithes as the minimum standard of Christian giving;** and be it further

Resolved, **That the Secretary of the Convention be directed to distribute signatory pages for Bishops and Deputies of each Diocese signifying their commitment to the tithes as the minimum standard of giving;** and be it further

Resolved, **That the Secretary be directed to collect the signatures with this resolution and publish the list of signatories in the *Journal*.**

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Indianapolis, 1994* (New York: General Convention, 1995), p. 172.



Resolution Number: 1991-A187
Title: On the Topic of Tithes and Bequests
Legislative Action Taken: Rejected
Text of the Resolution:

Resolved, the House of Deputies concurring, That we the members of this 70th General Convention of the Episcopal Church in the United States reaffirm the tithes as the minimum of giving for Episcopalians; and be it further

Resolved, That we the deputies and bishops of this Convention do hereby affirm with our signatures that we are tithing, or that we have adopted or will adopt a plan to do so within the next three years; and be it further

Resolved, That we the deputies and bishops of this Convention, as stewards of our accumulated assets, have each executed, or will within this *triennium* execute, wills arranging to leave bequests *as we are able* for religious and charitable purposes; and be it further

Resolved, That we do call all members of the Church to join us in these actions: and be it further

Resolved, That the Secretary of the Convention be directed to prepare and distribute signatory pages for bishops and deputies of each diocese signifying their commitment to these actions; and be it further

Resolved, That the Secretary be directed to collect the signatures with this resolution and publish the list of signatures in the Journal of the 1991 General Convention.



Resolution Number: 1991-A188
Title: Reaffirm Resolution on 50/50 Giving and Publish Level of
Diocesan and Congregational Giving
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred As Submitted
Final Text:

Resolved, the House of Deputies concurring, **That the 70th General Convention of the Episcopal Church in the United States reaffirm Resolution 1988-D144s of the 69th General Convention, which deals with giving to others as much as we spend on ourselves; and be it further**

Resolved, **That this Convention ask each diocese and congregation to determine and publish its true level of such giving; and be it further**

Resolved, **That this Convention ask each diocese and congregation to commit to a program that annually increases giving to others to the level encouraged by 1988-D144s during this Decade of Evangelism.**

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Phoenix, 1991* (New York: General Convention, 1992), p. 645.



Resolution Number: 1991-A189
Title: Reaffirm Resolution on Financial Pledging
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred As Submitted
Final Text:

Resolved, the House of Deputies concurring, **That the 70th General Convention of the Episcopal Church in the United States of America reaffirm Resolution 1988-D165 of the 69th General Convention, urging each household to make a financial pledge through their congregation toward the mission of the Church. (1988 statistics indicate that the mean figure of pledging in the church is 57.4% of households);** and be it further

Resolved, **That each household be urged to base pledging upon a percent of its income, known as proportional giving, and recognize tithing (10%) as the minimum standard of giving;** and be it further

Resolved, **That each diocesan bishop with the assistance of the Office of Stewardship in Mission Planning develop an educational approach to pledging appropriate to each diocese.**

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Phoenix, 1991* (New York: General Convention, 1992), p. 644.



Resolution Number: 1988-A164
Title: Affirm the Tithe As the Standard of Giving and Signify by Signatures
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred As Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, the House of Bishops concurring, **That we the members of this 69th General Convention of The Episcopal Church affirm the tithe as the minimum standard of giving for Episcopalians;** and be it further

Resolved, **That we the deputies and bishops of this Convention do hereby affirm through our signatures that we are tithing, or that we have adopted or will adopt a plan to tithe within the next three years;** and be it further

Resolved, **That we do call all members of the Church to join us in accepting the tithe as the minimum standard of Christian giving;** and be it further

Resolved, **That the Secretary of the Convention be directed to prepare and distribute signatory pages for bishops and deputies of each diocese signifying their commitment to the tithe as the minimum standard of giving;** and be it further

Resolved, **That the Secretary [of the Convention] be directed to collect the signatures with this resolution and publish the list of signatures in the Journal.**

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Detroit, 1988* (New York: General Convention, 1989), p. 208.



Resolution Number: 1988-D144
Title: Encourage Dioceses and Congregations Towards the Goal of 50/50 Giving
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred As Substituted
Final Text:

Resolved, the House of Deputies concurring, **That each diocese and congregation of this Church be encouraged to continue to work towards the goal of giving to others as much as they spend on themselves (commonly known as 50/50 giving), with at least 25% of the Net Disposable Budgeted Income (NDBI) of each congregation to be given through the diocese for mission and ministry.**

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Detroit, 1988* (New York: General Convention, 1989), p. 663.



Resolution Number: 1988-D165
Title: Urge Each Household to Make a Financial Pledge
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred As Substituted
Final Text:

Resolved, the House of Deputies concurring, **That this 69th General Convention urge each household to participate in the mission of the Church by making a financial pledge through their congregation.**

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Detroit, 1988* (New York: General Convention, 1989), p. 685.



Resolution Number: 1982-A116
Title: Affirm the Tithe As the Standard of Giving
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred As Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, the House of Bishops concurring, **That the tithe be affirmed as the minimum standard of giving for Episcopalians;** and be it further
Resolved, **That we Deputies and Bishops do hereby pledge ourselves to tithe, or to work towards tithing, as a minimum standard of our own giving and of our witness in the world;** and be it further
Resolved, **That we do call all of the Church to join us in accepting the biblical tithe as the minimum standard of Christian giving.**

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, New Orleans, 1982* (New York: General Convention, 1983), p. C-111.

17 - Stewardship and Development: HB

D055

TOPIC/TITLE: Tithing: Reaffirm Tithe as Minimum Standard

PROPOSER: Mr. Albert T. Mollegen Jr.

C&C PAGE:

BB PAGE:

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- 1 *Resolved*, the House of _____ concurring, That the 76th General Convention reaffirm
2 the tithe as the minimum standard of giving for Episcopalians; and be it further
3
4 *Resolved*, That the General Convention Secretariat is requested to make provisions for
5 the members of each House conveniently to indicate that they either are tithing or are
6 firmly committed to tithing within five years, by signing their name and clearly printing
7 their name and diocese, or, if they feel it inappropriate to make such a private matter
8 public, signing and clearly printing the word "Anonymous" and giving either their state
9 of residence or the state or foreign country where they were born; and be it further
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11 *Resolved*, That the record of names and "Anonymous" signings be published in the
12 Convention Journal and in such other Church publications as the Presiding Bishop may
13 designate.
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EXPLANATION:

In living memory, the 1982 General Convention was the first to state that the tithe is "the minimum standard of giving for Episcopalians." Several subsequent Conventions have re-affirmed this concept in the same or similar language. In the 1982 Stewardship Legislative Committee, there was vigorous debate as to whether the resolution should be a canon (they decided "no"), whether passing such a resolution was too legalistic, whether the resolution should specify whether the calculation should be based on before-tax or after-tax income, whether the calculation is restricted to gifts to this Church or whether financial support for other Godly work should be included, and so on. The 1982 Committee ultimately intentionally left such matters up to each individual Church member to decide. Subsequent Conventions have followed this precedent. Tithing is an important spiritual discipline. Except in the most unusual circumstances, it is a major contributor to the giver's spiritual health and inner joy. Note that the sometimes-offered wording "biblical tithe" is inaccurate because the word "tithe" does not always refer to the same thing in different places in the bible: sometimes it refers to income, sometimes to property. Other biblical standards include "all" as in "You shall love the Lord your God with all..." and 50-50, as in "If you have two cloaks..."

Endorser(s): The Very Rev. Canon Kevin E. Martin, Ms. Jane R. Cosby