
Executive Council Committee on Indigenous Ministries

Membership

The Rt. Rev. Michael Gene Smith, <i>Chair</i>	North Dakota, VI
Mr. Frank L. Oberly, <i>Vice-Chair</i>	Oklahoma, VII
The Rev. Rachel Taber-Hamilton, <i>Secretary</i>	Olympia, VIII
The Rt. Rev. David E. Bailey	Navajoland Area Mission, VIII
Ms. Jasmine Bostock, <i>since 2011</i>	Hawaii, VIII
Ms. Cornelia Eaton	Navajoland Area Mission, VIII
The Rev. Canon Anna Frank	Alaska, VIII
Ms. Carmine C. Goodhouse	North Dakota, VI
The Rev. Rosella A. Jim	Navajoland Area Mission, VIII
The Rt. Rev. Mark Lattime	Alaska, VIII
Mr. Lee Martin, <i>resigned 2011</i>	Central Gulf Coast, IV
The Rev. Deacon Lewis Powell	Northern California, VIII
Ms. Wilma Standing Bear	South Dakota, VI
The Rt. Rev. John Tarrant	South Dakota, VI
Ms. Erma J. Vizenor	Minnesota, VI
The Rev. Deacon Terry L. Star, <i>EC Liaison</i>	North Dakota, VI
Ms. Sarah Eagle Heart, <i>Staff</i>	

Summary of Work

Response to General Convention Resolutions

In response to General Convention Resolution 2009-D035 (Repudiate the Doctrine of Discovery) and 2006-D046 (Jamestown Covenant), the Executive Council Committee on Indigenous Ministry (ECCIM) recommended to the Executive Council, as it meets in the various provinces of The Episcopal Church, to recognize the Indigenous Peoples of that locale or province by enlisting the Native American Program Officer and/or this Committee's Executive Council Liaison to facilitate these recognitions.

The Committee worked with the Indigenous Theological Training Institute to sponsor the Oklahoma IV Consultation in response to General Convention Resolution 2009-A150. While it was recognized that the needs of Native Episcopal communities are many and varied, and that "one size does not fit all," there was consensus and a renewed commitment to eight directives:

- The continuing inclusion and empowering of Indigenous Peoples in the decision-making apparatus of the Church.
- Exploration and experimentation with alternative modes of Church governance and structure.
- Consultation with all programs of The Episcopal Church designed to combat the evils of racism.
- Assistance in the development of a variety of media especially designed to foster cross-cultural appreciation and understanding.
- Assistance in the design of material and programs for the training of Indigenous Church leaders both lay and ordained.
- Assistance in the design of educational curricula for adults and children, addressing both Church and broad social needs.
- Exposure of the whole Church to Native Spirituality and encouraging the Native community to offer this to the whole Church.
- Require a high standard of consistent communication, taking into account diverse communication needs, using all methods to share the abundant gifts, resources and accomplishments of Native American ministry throughout the Church.

The Committee formed a partnership with the Office of Indigenous Ministries, the Office of Social and Economic Justice, and White Bison, Inc., in response to Resolution 2009-A155 (Alleviation of Domestic Poverty). This marked the first time a "traditional" Native American non-profit organization and The Episcopal Church worked collaboratively to provide training programs of healing. This was significant in Indian Country, particularly because of White Bison's

“Forgiveness Journey” that visited twenty-three boarding schools in 2009. The method, Asset Based Community Development (ABCD), was also employed as a means to alleviating poverty through community organizing, but the Committee recognized that healing was necessary in conjunction with action and so the healing programs of White Bison, Inc. were employed. The Committee supports not only the programs mentioned, but any other healing programs utilized by tribal communities.

The Committee conducted its work utilizing the Charter of Lifelong Christian Formation, the Five Marks of Mission and the Baptismal Covenant.

Goals and Objectives for the 2013–2015 Triennium

Goal 1: Build a strong, positive, Indigenous voice that reaches everyone in our communities and the larger Church.

- Develop culturally appropriate training in public speaking and the structure of The Episcopal Church in the United States of America.
- Educate ourselves and our constituents to the issues and concerns of The Episcopal Church.
- Create training programs for young adults/college students to become good communicators of the Gospel.
- Develop skills in Internet communication.

Goal 2: Explore possible links with Indigenous Persons of The Episcopal Church in Latin America.

- Translate current culturally relevant resources into appropriate languages.
- Develop additional resources.
- Recognize the growing numbers of Indigenous Peoples joining The Episcopal Church in South America.

Goal 3: Increase lay and ordained Indigenous leadership for more real involvement and participation in The Episcopal Church.

- Develop an Indigenous leadership list for the House of Deputies for possible appointments to the CCABs.
- Develop Churchwide guidelines for Indigenous Ordination.
- Increase the opportunities for laity training and enrichment in culturally based theological education.

Proposed Resolutions

Resolution A129 Increase Aid for Ministry with Native Peoples

Resolved, the House of _____ concurring, That the 77th General Convention request the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget & Finance to consider increasing by 20% the base budget support awarded at the 76th General Convention to each of the four “aided dioceses” (South Dakota, North Dakota, Alaska, Navajoland) for ministry with Native Peoples for the 2013–2015 triennial budget.

Explanation

An increase is necessary due to increased costs of the denominational health insurance program and travel expenses in these vast geographic areas in order to continue “to proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom” (Five Marks of Mission, #1) and “to teach baptize and nurture new believers” (Five Marks of Mission, #2) in these dioceses encompassing some of the poorest counties and reservations in the United States where unemployment rates of 50-80% are not uncommon.

Resolution A130 Increase Program Budget of Office of Native Ministries

Resolved, the House of _____ concurring, That the 77th General Convention request the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget & Finance to consider increasing by 20% the Program Budget of the Office of Native Ministries awarded at the 76th General Convention 2009 in the 2013–2015 triennial budget.

Explanation

In order to “teach, baptize and nurture new believers” (Five Marks of Mission, #2) in Indigenous communities, including those of Province IX, an increase is necessary to provide adequate culturally relevant resources.

Resolution A131 Express Solidarity with Indigenous Peoples

Resolved, The House of _____ concurring, That the 77th General Convention expresses its solidarity with the Indigenous Peoples of the world and supports the rights of Indigenous Peoples to live in and retain their traditional lands and territories, to maintain their languages and enrich their cultures, and to ensure that their traditions are strengthened and passed on for generations to come; and be it further

Resolved, That the 77th General Convention urges the governments and nation states of the world to dismantle the legal structures and policies based on the Doctrine of Discovery and dominance; and be it further

Resolved, That the 77th General Convention requests the governments and nation states of the world to ensure that their policies, regulations, and laws that affect Indigenous Peoples conform to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples; and be it further

Resolved, That the 77th General Convention calls upon the governments and nation states of the world to empower and enable Indigenous Peoples to identify their own aspirations and issues of concern and fully involve them, after sufficient and prior consultation, in creating and implementing solutions that recognize and respect the collective rights of Indigenous Peoples to exercise self-determination and self-governance; and be it further

Resolved, That the 77th General Convention calls on congregations, institutions, dioceses, and corporate offices of The Episcopal Church, with the aid of resources such as “Exposing the Doctrine of Discovery,” to reflect upon their history and to encourage them to support Indigenous Peoples in their ongoing efforts to exercise their inherent sovereignty and fundamental human rights, to continue to raise awareness about the issues facing Indigenous Peoples, and to develop advocacy campaigns to support the rights, aspirations, and needs of Indigenous Peoples; and be it further

Resolved, That the 77th General Convention calls on congregations, institutions, dioceses, and corporate offices of The Episcopal Church to support continued use and development of theological reflections by Indigenous Peoples, with guidance from the Office of Indigenous Ministries, Indigenous Theological Training Institute, local Schools for Ministry and seminaries, which promote Indigenous visions of full, good, and abundant life and which strengthen their own spiritual and theological reflections.

Explanation

In 2009, the 76th General Convention repudiated and denounced the Doctrine of Discovery as fundamentally opposed to the Gospel of Jesus Christ and as a violation of the inherent human rights that all individuals and peoples have received from God. “Exposing the Doctrine of Discovery: A Call to Healing and Hope” includes resources developed by and available through the Office of Indigenous Ministry. In order “to seek to transform unjust structures of society” (Five Marks of Mission, #4), and “to teach, baptize and nurture new believers” (Five Marks of Mission, #3), the Executive Council’s Committee on Indigenous Ministries urges the adoption of the resolution above.

Resolution A132 Dismantling of the Effects of the Doctrine of Discovery

Resolved, The House of _____ concurring, That the 77th General Convention calls upon congregations, institutions, dioceses and the corporate offices of The Episcopal Church to participate in the dismantling of the effects of the Doctrine of Discovery by advocating for protection of the sacred sites of Indigenous Peoples, compliance with the Native American Graves

Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990, vigilance in reporting violations, and awareness of culturally sensitive areas that may be affected by church activities and expansion.

Explanation

The 76th General Convention passed Resolution 2009-A152, which directed the Executive Council Committee on Indigenous Ministries to study and assess the preservation of burial sites and other sacred places of Indigenous Peoples in the countries that comprise The Episcopal Church.

In 2007, the United Nation Declaration on Human Rights of Indigenous Peoples was passed. The UN Declaration states in Article 11 “Indigenous peoples have the right to practice and revitalize their cultural traditions and customs. This includes the right to maintain, protect and develop the past, present and future manifestations of their cultures, such as archaeological and historical sites, artifacts, designs, ceremonies, technologies and visual and performing arts and literature.” In Article 12, the declaration reads that “Indigenous peoples have the right to manifest, practice, develop and teach their spiritual and religious traditions, customs and ceremonies; the right to maintain, protect, and have access in privacy to their religious and cultural sites; the right to the use and control of their ceremonial objects; and the right to the repatriation of their human remains.”

Even as these types of declarations that are meant to empower Indigenous Peoples and extend their right to protect cultural and grave sites, and even as specific laws are passed by the United States government (i.e. the American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978 and the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990), these efforts have not ended the destruction of culturally sensitive heritage areas and burial grounds.

Resolution A133 Financial Support for the Indigenous Theological Training Institute

Resolved, The House of ____ concurring, That the 77th General Convention requests the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget and Finance to consider a budget allocation of \$142,000 for each year of the triennium for a total of \$426,000 for support of the Indigenous Theological Training Institute.

Explanation

The Indigenous Theological training Institute (ITTI), founded in 1994 to improve theological training and leadership development in Native communities, has not received an increase in funding in 16 years. The ITTI was founded to respond to a lack of training and education for both lay and ordained leaders in Native American communities. The ITTI has continued to provide canonically appropriate training and education. The first goal of the Indigenous Theological Training Institute is to strengthen the cultural appropriateness of theological training for indigenous people in The Episcopal Church. We will accomplish this goal by entering into partnership with existing theological training programs to provide culturally appropriate theological education at the community level, as well as regional and national training events. ITTI's second goal is to assist in proclaiming the Gospel by increasing the number of lay and ordained ministers in Native Communities. We will accomplish this goal by awarding scholarships for Indigenous people attending accredited seminaries, other training programs, and other existing diocesan programs. ITTI's third goal is to educate the circle of the entire Episcopal Church to our unique ministry, spirituality and theological training. We will accomplish this by continuing to publish the First People's Theological Journal, and by providing other forms of communication and media sources.

Budget Report

The Committee will meet approximately six times during the next triennium. This will require \$36,400 for 2013, \$36,400 for 2014, \$10,000 for the Anglican Indigenous Network meeting in 2013, and \$36,400 for 2015, for a total of \$119,200 for the triennium.