

**General Convention of The Episcopal Church 2022
Archives' Research Report**

Resolution No.: 2022-A017
Title: Assessment of Past Colonialism in the Church's World Mission Ministries
Proposer: Standing Commission on World Mission
Topic: World Mission

Directly Related: (Attached)

2018-A207 Affirm Beloved Community as a Global Community

Indirectly Related: (Available in the [Acts of Convention](#) database, searchable by resolution number)

None

In preparing this report, the Archives researched the resolutions in the Acts of Convention database for the period 1973 through 2018, selecting "direct" resolutions that have a substantive bearing on the proposed legislation. The "direct" resolutions are attached and "indirect" resolutions are available in the Acts of Convention database. Committee members who require other research assistance should contact the Archives through the [Research Request Form](#) or call 800-525-9329.

A017 - Assessment of Past Colonialism in the Church's World Mission Ministries

Final Status: Not Yet Finalized

Proposed by: Standing Commission on World Mission

Requests New Interim Body: No

Amends C&C or Rules of Order: No

Has Budget Implications: No

Cost:

HiA: HB

Legislative Committee Currently Assigned: 05 - World Mission

Completion Status: Incomplete

Latest House Action: N/A

Supporting Documents: No

Resolution Text

Resolved, the House of Deputies concurring,

That the 80th General Convention acknowledge and grieve the participation of the Episcopal Church and its various entities and institutions in colonialism in North America, Latin America, Africa, and Asia; and warns of and laments colonial mindsets in the Church today; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention affirm that Colonialism and its continuing impacts are antithetical to the Gospel as proclaimed by our Savior Jesus Christ, and that we are all called to repent and atone for the evils perpetuated in the name of Christ in the missionary field; and be it further

Resolved, That the Standing Commission on World Mission (SCWM) encourage the Episcopal Church to use principles and practices which turn from the colonial mindset of the past towards mutuality of relationships in our mission, ministries, and outreach; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention direct the SCWM to deliver a report to the 81st General Convention on the historic role of the Episcopal Church in colonialism through its missionary work, and how and where a colonial mindset continues to prejudice our work in propagating the Gospel.

Explanation

When the Church Missionary Society of the Episcopal Church met for the first time in 1828, the Rev. D. Wainwright offered the opening sermon which read in part: "The Indians of Western America and the isles of the Pacific are ignorant and degraded; the savage hordes of Africa are remote and intractable." From the beginning, the missionary work of the Episcopal Church was wrapped up in the broader effort at colonization. In fact, the first missionary efforts undertaken in the Church were under the auspices of the Colonization Society.

Looking back we are now aware that Episcopal Missionary efforts, while always undertaken with the goal of propagating the Gospel all over the world, also suffered from the unmistakable connection to colonialism.

This resolution calls on the Church to review its missionary history from our founding to the present day in order to study and reflect upon the difficult reality of our complicity in colonialism and how we have unwittingly done harm to the propagation of the Gospel so that we can repent, ask forgiveness, make amends, and strive not to repeat those mistakes.



Resolution Number: 2018-A207
Title: Affirm Beloved Community as a Global Community
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 79th General Convention reaffirm that “being a beloved community” means being members of a global community honoring our full name: The Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the Protestant Episcopal Church; and be it further

Resolved, That this General Convention affirm that in baptism we are called to companionship, which means standing with, traveling with, and sharing bread with another; and be it further

Resolved, That this General Convention continue to repent of colonialism and recognize that the work of mission is a Christ-centered, mutual undertaking, which is most effective when the traditional roles of “giver” and “receiver” are discarded, and the gifts of all are accepted, welcomed, and utilized; and be it further

Resolved, That this General Convention encourage dioceses, congregations and mission organizations to establish productive, mutual relationships with other outreach communities that have similar intent, but may not be part of The Episcopal Church; and be it further

Resolved, That this General Convention urge dioceses, congregations, and individuals to pray regularly for specific dioceses and congregations and individuals with whom they are in companionship; and be it further

Resolved, That this General Convention encourage dioceses, congregations and individuals to form one-to-one relationships through social media with individuals and congregations with whom they are in companionship.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Austin, 2018* (New York: General Convention, 2018), p. 440.