

General Convention of The Episcopal Church 2022 Archives' Research Report

Resolution No.: 2022-C017
Title: Assessing the Church's Response to COVID-19
Proposer: California
Topic: Health

Directly Related: (Attached)

2018-D007 Support Disaster Relief, Recovery, and Prevention
2009-A077 Urge Congregations to Implement a Health Ministry

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

1991-A094 Recommend Every Diocese to Address Health Issues
1991-D088 Encourage Understanding of Mental Illness and the Needs of the Mentally Ill
1988-D108 Advocate for Appropriate Health Care for All Who Are Ill
1973-A108 Establish a Joint Commission on Religion and Health

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.

C017 - Assessing the Church's Response to COVID-19

Final Status: Not Yet Finalized

Proposed by: California

Requests New Interim Body: No

Amends C&C or Rules of Order: No

Has Budget Implications: No

Cost:

HiA: HB

Legislative Committee Currently Assigned: 10 - Congregational & Diocesan Vitality

Completion Status: Incomplete

Latest House Action: N/A

Supporting Documents: No

Resolution Text

Resolved, the House of _____ concurring,

That the House of Deputies of the 80th General Convention of The Episcopal Church direct the House of Deputies Committee on the State of the Church to assess the response of The Episcopal Church to the COVID-19 pandemic in the areas of pastoral care, liturgy, evangelism, Christian formation, stewardship, community engagement, communications, and social justice work; and be it further

Resolved, That this assessment include an examination of the challenges encountered during the pandemic and of its differing impact on people of different racial and ethnic groups, ages, genders, wealth or precarity, abilities and disabilities, family structures, immigration statuses, and nationalities; and be it further

Resolved, That the House of Deputies Committee on the State of the Church report and make recommendations to the 81st General Convention for improving the church's response to future disasters and to the changed circumstances of the post-pandemic church, as well as ideas that may be adapted for church life and work in the 21st century.

Explanation

The COVID-19 pandemic has been described by many as an apocalyptic moment, from the Greek *apokalupsis*, meaning 'uncovering', 'unveiling', or 'revealing' with intense clarity. COVID is revealing with intense clarity how the everyday structures of our world disproportionately harm some groups and benefit others.

Accordingly, it behooves the church at this time to ask what the pandemic has revealed about The Episcopal Church, so that with the eyes of our heart enlightened, we may know with greater clarity what is the hope to which God has called us (para Eph 1:17-18). How have the pandemic and our responses to it affected different groups in different ways? How have our adaptations to church life variously affected accessibility? How have existing inequities in our church affected the ability of congregations to adapt and to survive? What are the implications of this revelatory moment for the stewardship of the church's resources? Lastly, where might we be called to greater boldness of action?

The pandemic is also a learning moment. We have already seen new forms of congregational engagement develop, not only in Sunday worship, but also in weekly Bible studies, church meetings, fellowship groups, and community outreach. The Committee should investigate what we might learn from these new forms of church life, from the successes and the failures, so that we might discern what innovations should be carried forward into the future and what unjust practices and structures should be left in the past.



Resolution Number: 2018-D007
Title: Support Disaster Relief, Recovery, and Prevention
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 79th General convention commend the efforts of Episcopalians to support their families and neighbors in times of disaster, both individually and collectively, especially the leadership of Episcopal Relief & Development in coordinating immediate response and supporting long-term recovery; and be it further

Resolved, That the 79th General Convention acknowledge and commend Episcopal Relief & Development's work with dioceses in providing life-saving assistance such as water, food, housing assistance, medical supplies, gift cards, gas and other emergency supplies and pastoral care to the people of Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands (both United States and United Kingdom), Texas, Florida, and California in the aftermath of a devastating series of hurricanes, floods, fires, and mudslides in 2017; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention urge the U.S. federal government to fund and support not only immediate, but also long-term community and economic recovery from human-caused and natural disasters in the 50 States and U.S. Territories in equal treatment, recognizing that full recovery for a community and economy can require decades of investment at a scale only feasible through the collective action of all Americans through our federal government, and that material poverty exacerbates the effects of natural disasters and lengthens the time to recover from them; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention urge the United States government in concert with state, regional, and local governments to invest in large-scale preventative disaster and resilience planning for the effects of climate change on the scale of natural disasters in the future, and to coordinate these planning efforts with other nations as appropriate (for example, in the Caribbean region, with the United Kingdom, France, Netherlands, and Caribbean governments, and with regional and global agencies); and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention encourage all Episcopalians to prepare and plan how they will respond to disasters, how their parishes and dioceses can serve, and how to best partner with Episcopal Relief & Development to respond to local, regional, and national disasters as necessary, including using the Episcopal Asset Map and other tools to facilitate local partnerships between Episcopal Relief & Development and local dioceses and congregations; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention encourage all dioceses and congregations to create emergency preparedness and response plans that are inclusive of people with disabilities.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Austin, 2018* (New York: General Convention, 2018), pp. 440-441.



Resolution Number: 2009-A077

Title: Urge Congregations to Implement a Health Ministry

Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended

Final Text:

Resolved, That the 76th General Convention urges the congregations of The Episcopal Church, which have not already done so, to explore and implement health ministry as an organizing concept or vital component of outreach and pastoral care of the congregations by 2012; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention encourages congregations to raise awareness of health ministries and promote the understanding that health includes body, mind and spirit.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Anaheim, 2009* (New York: General Convention, 2009), p. 536.