

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

Resolution No.: 2022-D050
Title: Reunion of the Diocese of The Episcopal Church in North Texas with The Episcopal Diocese of Texas
Proposer: The Rev. Canon Christine Faulstich
Topic: Dioceses

Directly Related: (Attached)

2018-A114 Amend Canon I.10 [Of New Dioceses]

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.

D050 - Reunion of the Diocese of The Episcopal Church in North Texas with The Episcopal Diocese of Texas

Final Status: Not Yet Finalized

Proposed by: The Rev. Canon Christine Faulstich

Endorsed by: The Rev. Bradley Dyche, Ms. Katie Sherrod

Requests New Interim Body: No

Amends C&C or Rules of Order: No

Has Budget Implications: No

Cost:

HiA: HD

Legislative Committee Currently Assigned: 04 - Governance & Structure

Completion Status: Incomplete

Latest House Action: N/A

Supporting Documents: No

Resolution Text

Resolved, the House of _____ concurring,

That the 80th General Convention approve the reunion of the Diocese of The Episcopal Church in North Texas with and into The Episcopal Diocese of Texas pursuant to Canon I.10.6.

Explanation

Canon I.10.6 allows a diocese and another diocese that was formed by division therefrom to be reunited, subject to the approval of their respective diocesan conventions and General Convention.

When The Episcopal Diocese of Texas (EDOT) was created in 1849, its territory included the entire state. Over time, as the population of the state grew, EDOT ceded parts of its territory to create new dioceses. For example, it ceded the north central part of the state to create the Diocese of Dallas. In 1982, the Diocese of Dallas in turn ceded its western 24 counties to create the Diocese of Fort Worth.

In 2008, the Diocese of Fort Worth was torn apart when, led by a former bishop, the Diocese and many of its congregations left the Episcopal Church and joined the Anglican Church in North America (ACNA). In response, Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori

convened a convention at which the congregations who wished to remain in the Episcopal Church as the Episcopal Diocese of Fort Worth elected a Provisional Bishop and populated other diocesan bodies. Lengthy litigation between the two groups ensued over the issue of which group owned the name "Episcopal Diocese of Fort Worth" and the property of the diocese and its parishes. In 2020 the Texas Supreme Court ruled in favor of the ACNA group and awarded them the name and title to almost all the diocesan and parish properties. When the Supreme Court of the United States declined to hear the appeal of the Episcopalians, the decision of the Texas Supreme Court went into effect.

As a result, the diocese that remained in The Episcopal Church was renamed "The Episcopal Church in North Texas" (ECNTX). In its 24 North Texas counties are 13 congregations, many of which have found new places to worship. The diocese remains headquartered in Fort Worth, and its Provisional Bishop is now The Rt. Rev. J. Scott Mayer, Bishop of the Diocese of Northwest Texas.

After the conclusion of most of the litigation, Bishop Mayer convened a group of clergy and lay leaders to identify and evaluate options for the future of ECNTX. This discernment group eventually recommended to their Standing Committee that ECNTX reunite with and become a part of EDOT.

EDOT, headquartered in Houston, consists of 153 congregations in 57 counties in east, central, and south Texas, 15 college ministries, 58 Episcopal schools, Camp Allen, several social service agencies, and five foundations dedicated to the health and growth of the Church. It is also home to the Seminary of the Southwest. Its Bishop is The Rt. Rev. C. Andrew Doyle.

After extensive discussion, in May the two dioceses entered into an Agreement of Reunion, which was approved by both Bishops and their respective Standing Committees. In June the Agreement of Reunion was then approved by the conventions of both dioceses.



Resolution Number: 2018-A114
Title: Amend Canon I.10 [Of New Dioceses]
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 79th General Convention amend Canon I.10 as follows:

Sec. 1. Whenever a new Diocese shall ~~is proposed~~ to be formed within the limits of any Diocese, or by the junction of two (2) or more Dioceses, or parts of Dioceses, and such action shall have been ratified by the General Convention, the Bishop of the Diocese within the limits of which a Diocese is formed, or in case of the junction of two or more Dioceses, or parts of Dioceses, the senior Bishop by consecration, shall thereupon call the Primary Convention of the new Diocese, for the purpose of enabling it to organize, and shall fix the time and place of holding the same, such place being within the territorial limits of the new Diocese. ~~the Ecclesiastical Authorities and the Standing Committees of the Dioceses involved in the proposed new diocese shall submit for approval to the Conventions of each Diocese involved a joint agreement of union setting forth their agreements, including the manner of determining the Bishop Diocesan and other Bishops (if any), the provisions of the Constitution and Canons of the new Diocese, and such other matters as may be necessary or proper. Upon approval by the Conventions of each of the involved Dioceses, the joint agreement of union shall be submitted for ratification by the General Convention no less than ninety (90) days prior to the first legislative day of the next meeting of the General Convention.~~

Sec. 2. Promptly after ratification by the General Convention, the Ecclesiastical Authority of the new Diocese, as set forth in the joint agreement of union, shall call the Primary Convention of the new Diocese, for the purpose of enabling it to organize, and shall fix the time and place of holding the same, such place being within the territorial limits of the new Diocese. ~~In case there should be no Bishop who can call such Primary Convention, pursuant to the foregoing provision, then the duty of calling such Convention for the purpose of organizing and of fixing the time and place of its meeting, shall be vested in the Standing Committee of the Diocese within the limits of which the new one is erected, or in the Standing Committee of the oldest of the Dioceses by the junction of which, or of parts of which, the new Diocese may be formed. And such Standing Committee shall make the call immediately after ratification of the General Convention.~~

Sec. 3. Whenever one Diocese is about to be divided into two Dioceses, the Convention of such Diocese shall declare which portion thereof is to be in the new Diocese, and shall make the same known to the General Convention before the ratification of such division.

Sec. 4. Whenever a new Diocese shall have organized in Primary Convention in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution and Canons in such case

made and provided, and in the manner prescribed in the previous Sections of this Canon, and shall have chosen a name and acceded to the Constitution of the General Convention in accordance with Article V, Section 1 of the Constitution, and shall have laid before the Executive Council certified copies of the Constitution adopted at its Primary Convention, and the proceedings preparatory to the formation of the proposed new Diocese, such new Diocese shall thereupon be admitted into union with the General Convention.

Sec. 5. In the event of the erection of an Area Mission into a Diocese of this Church, as provided in Article V, ~~Sec.~~*Section 1*, the Convocation of the said Area Mission shall be entitled to elect Deputies to the succeeding General Convention, and also to elect a Bishop. The jurisdiction previously assigned to the Bishop in the Area Mission shall be terminated upon the admission of the new Diocese.

Sec. 6 (a) When a Diocese, and ~~another Diocese~~*one or more other Dioceses which has been* that were formed either by division therefrom or by erection into a Diocese or a Missionary Diocese formed by division therefrom, shall desire to be reunited into one Diocese, the proposed reunion must be initiated *by the approval of the Conventions of the involved Dioceses of a joint agreement of union setting forth their agreements, including the manner of determining the Bishop Diocesan and other Bishops (if any), provisions of the Constitution and Canons of the new Diocese, and such other matters as may be necessary or proper.* ~~a mutual agreement between the Conventions of the two Dioceses, consented to by the Ecclesiastical Authority of each Diocese.~~ If the said agreement of the Dioceses is made and the consents of their Conventions are given more than three months before the next meeting of the General Convention, the fact of the agreement and consents shall be certified by the Ecclesiastical Authority and the Secretary of the Convention of each *involved* Diocese to all the Bishops of the Church having jurisdiction and to the Standing Committees of all the Dioceses; and when the consents of a majority of such Bishops and of a majority of the Standing Committees to the proposed reunion shall have been received, the facts shall be similarly certified to the Secretary of the House of Deputies of the General Convention, and thereupon the reunion shall be considered complete. But if the agreement is made and the consents given within three months of the next meeting of the General Convention, the facts shall be certified instead to the Secretary of the House of Deputies, who shall lay them before the two Houses; and the reunion shall be deemed to be complete when it shall have been ~~sanctioned~~*approved* by a majority vote in the House of Bishops, and in the House of Deputies ~~voting by orders.~~

(b) ~~The Bishop of the parent Diocese shall be the Bishop, and the Bishop of the junior Diocese shall be the Bishop Coadjutor, of the reunited Diocese; but if there be a vacancy in the Episcopate of either Diocese, the Bishop of the other Diocese shall be the Bishop, and the Bishop Coadjutor if there be one shall be the Bishop Coadjutor, of the reunited Diocese.~~

(c) ~~Sec. 7~~ When the union of two (2) or more Dioceses or portions of Dioceses or the reunion of the two (2) or more Dioceses shall have been completed, the facts shall be certified to the Presiding Bishop and to the Secretary of the House

of Deputies. Thereupon the Presiding Bishop shall notify the Secretary of the House of Bishops of any alteration in the status or style of the Bishop or Bishops concerned, and the Secretary of the House of Deputies shall strike the name of the ~~junior~~any Diocese that will cease to exist or is being renamed from the roll of Dioceses in union with the General Convention; and, if appropriate, amend the name of the newly united Diocese on the roll of Dioceses in union with the General Convention.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Austin, 2018* (New York: General Convention, 2018), pp. 1114-1116.