

General Convention of The Episcopal Church 2024 Archives' Research Report

Resolution No.: 2024-A034

Title: Promoting Equitable Formation for Future Church Leaders through Dismantling Racism and Achieving Racial Justice and Healing Education in Seminaries and Schools of Theological Education

Proposer: Executive Council Committee on Anti-Racism & Reconciliation

Topic: Racism, Seminaries, Theological Education

Directly Related: (Attached)

2022-A052 Revise Mandate for Executive Council Committee on Anti-Racism and Reconciliation

2022-A078 Create a Task Force on Imagining a Church Grounded in Social Justice as Christian Ministry

2018-A044 Set Essential Components of Anti-Racism or Racial Reconciliation Training

2018-D011 Reaffirm Clergy Training on the Doctrine of Discovery

2015-A182 Address Systemic Racial Injustice

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

2022-C035 Create Training Modules on Slavery and Reparations

2018-B011 Encourage Seminaries to Adopt Inclusive Language

2015-A001 Reform Seminary Training and Develop Transformative Encounters

2015-D040 Develop Anti-Racism Youth Ministry Curriculum

2009-A135 Request Funds for Seminarian Cross-Cultural Formation

2006-A127 Endorse Restorative Justice and Anti-Racism

In preparing this report, the Archives researched the resolutions in the Acts of Convention database for the period 1973 through 2022, 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](#).

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A034 - Promoting Equitable Formation for Future Church Leaders through Dismantling Racism and Achieving Racial Justice and Healing Education in Seminaries and Schools of Theological Education

Final Status: Not Yet Finalized

Proposed by: Executive Council Committee on Anti-Racism & Reconciliation

Has Budget Implications: No

Cost:

Amends C&C or Rules of Order: No

Requests New Interim Body: Yes

Changes Mandate Of Existing Ib: No

Directs Dfms Staff: Yes

Directs Dioceses: Yes

Directs Executive Council: No

HiA: No House Assigned

Legislative Committee Currently Assigned: No Committee Assigned

Completion Status: Incomplete

Latest House Action: N/A

Supporting Documents: No

Resolution Text

That the 81st General Convention of The Episcopal Church (“TEC”) recognize that the formation of future church leaders through seminary and schools of theological education holds immense potential to create lasting change in promoting justice, inclusion, and healing; and be it further

Resolved, That TEC strongly urge all Episcopal seminaries and schools of theological education to incorporate dismantling racism and achieving racial justice and healing education into their curricula based on tenants passed by the Church in resolution 2018-A044 Set Essential Components of AntiRacism and Racial Reconciliation Training and described in the Framework for Anti-Racism and Reconciliation Training; and be it further

Resolved, That TEC urge that seminaries and schools of theological education regularly assess and review the effectiveness of their dismantling racism and achieving racial justice and healing education programs and provide annual reports to the Episcopal Church indicating progress, challenges, and adjustments made to enhance the impact of the training; and be it further

Resolved, That TEC encourage dioceses and provinces to support their seminaries and schools of theological education in implementing dismantling racism and achieving racial justice and healing education; and be it further

Resolved, That All Episcopal seminaries and schools of theological education are strongly encouraged to integrate the required dismantling racism and achieving racial justice and healing education into their curricula within the next academic year following the adoption of this resolution; and be it further

Resolved, That TEC institute a requirement for certification of seminaries and schools of theological education that the institution provide education on dismantling racism and achieving racial justice and healing set forth by the Church in resolution 2018-A044 Set Essential Components of Anti-Racism and Racial Reconciliation Training and described in the Framework for Anti-Racism and Reconciliation Training.

Explanation

Acknowledging the profound and urgent need to address systemic racism and promote dismantling racism and achieving racial justice and healing within the Episcopal Church and the wider society, we recognize that the formation of future church leaders holds immense potential to create lasting change. As a Church, we are called to embody the teachings of Christ by promoting justice, inclusion, and healing. To further these goals, we propose the implementation of dismantling racism and achieving racial justice and healing training as a requirement in seminaries and schools of theological education.

We request the Presiding Bishop and the President of the House of Deputies to establish a task force comprising theological educators, experts in anti-racism work, and representatives from diverse communities within the Church. This task force will collaborate with seminaries and schools of theological education to develop comprehensive dismantling racism and achieving racial justice and healing curricula that are theologically sound, contextually relevant, and culturally sensitive.

We urge seminaries and schools of theological education to regularly assess and review the effectiveness of their dismantling racism and achieving racial justice and healing training programs. Seminaries and schools of theological education shall provide annual reports to the Episcopal Church indicating progress, challenges, and adjustments made to enhance the impact of the training.

We encourage dioceses and provinces to support their seminaries and schools of theological education in implementing dismantling racism and achieving racial justice and healing training. Dioceses are encouraged to allocate resources, both financial and human, to aid in the development and sustained execution of these programs.

Reporting and Sharing Best Practices

We request the task force established in Section 2 to compile and share best practices, resources, and case studies related to dismantling racism and achieving racial justice and healing training. This information shall be disseminated through official Episcopal Church channels to facilitate learning and collaboration among seminaries and schools of theological education and dioceses.

Implementation Timeline

All Episcopal seminaries and schools of theological education are strongly encouraged to integrate the required dismantling racism and achieving racial justice and healing training into their curricula within the next academic year following the adoption of this resolution. We affirm our commitment to eradicating racism within the Episcopal Church and beyond. By requiring dismantling racism and achieving racial justice and healing training in seminaries and schools of theological education, we reaffirm our dedication to nurturing clergy and lay leaders who are equipped to lead with compassion, justice, and an unwavering commitment to dismantling systemic racism.



Resolution Number: 2022-A052
Title: Revise Mandate for Executive Council Committee on Anti-Racism and Reconciliation
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the mandate for the Executive Council Committee on Anti-Racism & Reconciliation is hereby clarified as follows:

“This Committee is charged with supporting and monitoring the Church’s work in response to General Convention resolutions directed at dismantling racism and promoting racial healing, justice, and reconciliation in the Church by:

- a) helping the church recognize and develop its work of racial healing, justice, and reconciliation as a fundamental and requisite part of Christian formation;
- b) supporting the work of Becoming Beloved Community: The Episcopal Church’s Long-Term Commitment to Racial Healing, Justice, and Reconciliation and other such initiatives the Presiding Officers, Executive Council, or Interim Bodies develop, and also the work of the Episcopal Coalition for Racial Equity and Justice;
- c) recommending, in collaboration with staff and other church organizations, resources and best practices for dismantling racism and for promoting racial healing, justice, and reconciliation that can be adapted to different contexts;
- d) collecting information from dioceses and provinces about their successes and challenges in complying with the canonical requirements and with General Convention Resolution 2018-A045 for providing anti-racism training;
- e) and sharing their findings with Executive Council on an annual basis.

Membership of the Executive Council Committee on Anti-Racism & Reconciliation shall be composed of:

one person named by the governing body of each province of this Church who has been trained in doing the work of dismantling racism and seeking to foster racial healing, justice, and reconciliation, has demonstrated experience in anti-racism/racial reconciliation work, has demonstrated the ability to make connections with people in their geographic area who do this work, and has demonstrated a commitment to make connections with people in the provinces who do this work;

one member of the Executive Council as appointed by the Chair and Vice-Chair of Executive Council;

one Bishop as appointed by the Presiding Officers;

members named who are from the racial or ethnic groups of black, Latino/a, Asian, Native American/Indigenous, and non-Hispanic white to ensure representation of diverse racial and ethnic voices on this Committee - if there are none, then the Chair and Vice-Chair of Executive Council shall appoint a member at large from each unrepresented racial or ethnic group;

a member named who is under 40, to ensure representation of multiple generations - if there are no members then the Chair and Vice-Chair of Executive Council shall appoint a member at large from each unrepresented generational group.

Members shall serve terms as follows:

Each Committee member shall serve one triennium beginning January 1 in the year following each General Convention until the December 31 following the next General Convention. Members may be named to serve consecutive terms by their provinces.

In the event that a province fails to name a person to serve on the Committee by [sic] January 1, when each term begins, the Chair and Vice-Chair of Executive Council shall appoint a qualified person from that province to serve on the Committee.

Vacancies shall be filled in the same manner as the original members were named. Vacancies in excess of 30 days shall be filled by the Chair and Vice-Chair of Executive Council, and in the case of a Bishop vacancy, by the Chair of Executive Council.”

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Baltimore, 2022* (New York: General Convention, 2023), pp. 837-838.



Resolution Number: 2022-A078
Title: Create a Task Force on Imagining a Church Grounded in Social Justice as Christian Ministry
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 80th General Convention affirm:

1. That social justice advocacy is a primary ministry of the Church; it is our corporate, public witness to the Mission of God “to restore all people to the unity of God and each other in Christ.” [BCP Catechism, page 855];
2. That social justice is about right relationships among and between all of us, centering the voice and experience of the marginalized (as we read in Matthew 25), and these are the relationships that have been, and continue to be, harmed by the systemic, unjust distribution of wealth, opportunity, and privilege;
3. That social justice ministry includes acts of mercy or charity but also must include dismantling institutions, structures, and policies that cause harm and divide us from each other; and it includes repairing the breach by rebuilding systems of justice, fairness, and equity (Isaiah 58);
4. Over this past triennium, (2018-2021) the global pandemic, racial justice uprisings, and escalation of the climate crisis including extreme wildfires and storms, as well as the societal fissures and institutional failures that these events have revealed, demand we understand this to be a revolutionary moment of accountability, repentance and renewed commitments to the mission of God. We are called to account for our failures to live the words we preach and pray. We acknowledge that historical practices, policies, and structures of the institutional church have played a role in the persistence of the systemic inequality and call out for out for immediate, urgent and enduring redress;

And be it further

Resolved, That all dioceses and congregations be called upon to ground every planning or business meeting or convention with prayers inviting an examination of conscience regarding the specific impact of the decisions of such meetings upon those who are poor, dispossessed, disadvantaged, or marginalized, and to provide and model forms for such examination of conscience; and be it further

Resolved, That all dioceses be called upon to offer, at least once a year, a diocesan-wide event or program and liturgy to engage our congregations and members in listening to and understanding the history and current context of our diverse local communities, with attention to those who have historically been dispossessed or disadvantaged; and be it further

Resolved, That this General Convention direct the creation of a Task Force on Imagining a Church Grounded in Social Justice as Christian Ministry be formed as a diverse group to include 2 bishops, 2 priests, 2 deacons, and 10 laypersons, in order to a) consider what the church must look like if we put our vocation to love our neighbor and to be repairers of the breach at the center of our work; b) to reach out to local and diocesan groups that are doing social justice and racial reconciliation work focused on systemic change, in order to understand what resources and gifts we already have in this work and where the gaps are; c) to liaise with the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music and the Standing Commission on Governance, Structure, Constitution and Canons, the Presiding Officers’ Advisory Group

on Beloved Community Implementation (if it is extended in the next triennium), and other relevant interim bodies on consideration of these questions and how to address the institutional barriers to change in the church; and d) be charged with making recommendations to the 81st General Convention for institutional change to support social justice as Christian ministry in the areas of governance and structure, prayer and liturgy, catechesis and lifelong formation for discipleship, especially with laypeople and consistent with an equitable and inclusive polity; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention request the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget and Finance to consider a budget allocation of \$55,000 for the implementation of this resolution.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Baltimore, 2022* (New York: General Convention, 2023), pp. 848-849.



Resolution Number: 2018-A044
Title: Set Essential Components of Anti-Racism or Racial Reconciliation Training
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Substituted
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 79th General Convention recognizes that widely different criteria have been used across the Church to determine if the completion of anti-racism training required in Title III and resolution 2000-B049 has been satisfied; and be it further
Resolved, that The Episcopal Church recognizes that in order to maintain a common theological framework in our commitment to dismantle the sin of racism that these specific components are essential to include in any Episcopal Anti-racism or Racial Reconciliation training:

- 1) Liturgy, preferably a celebration of Eucharist when possible or other corporate worship, grounding the work in scripture and spiritual formation
(Proclaiming the Dream of Beloved Community)
- 2) An Historical Component—including but not limited to (and, as appropriate to the context where the training is offered): The Episcopal Church’s role in slavery, its history with segregation and discrimination of people of color, the Doctrine of Discovery, The Episcopal Church’s role in taking indigenous children from their families through our participation in the boarding school system, and the Church’s responses to racism through the years.
(Telling the Truth about the Church and Race)
- 3) An Information or Didactic Component—including, but not limited to: the Baptismal Covenant, power, class, race, racism, internalized racial privilege, internalized racial oppression, implicit racial bias, intercultural awareness and communication, becoming co-conspirators in dismantling racism, and envisioning racial reconciliation.
(Repairing the Breach)
- 4) Engagement—including, but not limited to: establishing respectful communication guidelines, discussion, Bible Study, and other activities as indicated to accomplish learning objectives for these components.
(Practicing the Way of Love);

And be it further

Resolved, that the Executive Council Committee on Anti-Racism continue to collect and develop, in collaboration with the staff, Christian Formation professionals, and The Absalom Jones Episcopal Center for Racial Healing, resources and best practices for dismantling racism that can be shared online to aide in the consistent fulfillment of the requirement for anti-racism training for lay and ordained leaders across the Church.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Austin, 2018* (New York: General Convention, 2018), p. 668.



Resolution Number: 2018-D011
Title: Reaffirm Clergy Training on the Doctrine of Discovery
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 79th General Convention of the Episcopal Church, in accordance with the directive to all dioceses made by the 76th, 77th and 78th General Conventions, most recently with resolution 2015-A024, advance the education of all those seeking ordination in the Church by recommending a minimum of four hours of training on the Doctrine of Discovery; and be it further

Resolved, That the 79th General Convention direct the Indigenous Missioner of the Presiding Bishop's Office to identify and appoint indigenous representatives to provide training on the Doctrine of Discovery to those seeking ordination, such that the Office of Indigenous Ministries provide direction to and oversight of the Doctrine of Discovery training program; and be it further

Resolved, That the 79th General Convention encourage seminaries and local clergy formation programs to allocate funds from their organizational budgets or pursue available grant funding for the provision of four hours of training on the Doctrine of Discovery for those seeking ordination.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Austin, 2018* (New York: General Convention, 2018), p. 431.



Resolution Number: 2015-A182
Title: Address Systemic Racial Injustice
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 78th General Convention of the Episcopal Church recognize that many Episcopalians find it challenging to understand or know how to respond to 21st century systemic racial injustices that still occur in multiple contexts including but not limited to education; employment; housing; health care; banking; voting rights; immigration; policing, courts, and prisons, etc.; and be it further

Resolved, That the 78th General Convention affirms that the Gospel, our Baptismal Covenant, and our Marks of Mission call individuals, churches, dioceses, provinces, and the wider Church to find more effective and productive ways to respond to racial injustice as we love our neighbors as ourselves, respect the dignity of every human being, and transform unjust structures of society; and be it further

Resolved, That the 78th General Convention declare that “not knowing” and “not having the eyes to see and ears to hear” are serious obstacles to transforming unjust structures and therefore direct the Church at every level for this triennium to commit to increase the use of study, education, research, anti-racism training, liturgies, and Christian formation instruction that specifically address systemic racial injustice; and be it further

Resolved, That the 78th General Convention urge the Church at every level to increase the number of dialogues about systemic racial injustice it has with local, state and national bodies within the public and private spheres and that these dialogues be used to identify, examine, and offer correctives to policies and practices within and among these bodies that result in systemic racial disparities and injustices; and be it further

Resolved, That the 78th General Convention urge dioceses and congregations to create vehicles for listening to diverse neighbors and developing reconciling relationships; such options might include (a) listening campaigns in local communities, (b) partnerships with churches and organizations comprised predominately of a different race or culture (especially those targeted by oppression), (c) neighborhood prayer walks, (d) storytelling and speak-out events designed to facilitate truth-telling, healing and action, (e) and others with which leaders throughout the Church are familiar; and be it further

Resolved, That the 78th General Convention encourage Justice and Advocacy Ministries to partner with other church offices and organizations as appropriate to host, resource, and moderate an ongoing online forum for Episcopalians dedicated to the ministry of racial justice and reconciliation, with spaces dedicated to sharing about local and diocesan efforts and resources; and be it further

Resolved, That the 78th General Convention encourage Justice and Advocacy Ministries to partner with Youth Ministries to commission a gospel-centered, Internet-integrated, action-oriented, anti-racism youth ministry curriculum for congregations throughout The Episcopal Church, including those not in the United States, to be provided in English, Spanish and Haitian Creole; and be it further

Resolved, That the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music produce and post online a set of prayers for racial reconciliation and justice, suitable for inclusion in the Prayers of the People; and be it further

Resolved, That the 78th General Convention urge the Executive Council to conduct its own internal audit to assess to what extent, if at all, racial disparities and systemic racial injustices exist within the Church (including but not limited to clergy salaries and deployment); and be it further

Resolved, That the 78th General Convention request that the Executive Council report back to the 79th General Convention on the results of the internal audit; what concrete steps it and the wider Church took to address systemic racial injustice in the wider culture; and how effective those steps were.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Salt Lake City, 2015* (New York: General Convention, 2015), pp. 438-439.