

General Convention of The Episcopal Church 2024 Archives' Research Report

Resolution No.: 2024-A036
Title: Amend Canons to Use Approved Common Terminology to Describe Anti-Racism Work
Proposer: Executive Council Committee on Anti-Racism & Reconciliation
Topic: Inclusive Language, Racism, Reconciliation

Directly Related: (Attached)

2022-A131 Urge Episcopalians Utilize the Phrase "People of Color"
2018-B004 Urge Common Terminology to Describe Anti-Racism Work

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 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](#).

A036 - Amend Canons to Use Approved Common Terminology to Describe Anti-Racism Work

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: Yes

Requests New Interim Body: No

Changes Mandate Of Existing Ib: No

Directs Dfms Staff: No

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

Resolved, the House of _____ concurring,

That the 81st General Convention of The Episcopal Church (“TEC”) acknowledge the expansion of its focus beyond anti-racism to racial reconciliation as confirmed in resolution 2018 B004 Urge Common Terminology to Describe Anti-Racism Work; and be it further

Resolved, That Canon Title III.6.5 .g.4 be amended to read as follows and voted on at the 81st General Convention:

<Amended text as it would appear if adopted and concurred. Scroll below the line of asterisks (***) to see the version showing all deleted and added text.>**

4. the Church’s teaching on dismantling racism and achieving racial justice and healing;

<Proposed amended resolution text showing exact changes being made:>

4. the Church's teaching on racism dismantling racism and achieving racial justice and healing;

And be it further

Resolved, That Canon III.7.11.a.2 be amended to read as follows and voted on at the 81st General Convention:

<Amended text as it would appear if adopted and concurred. Scroll below the line of asterisks (***) to see the version showing all deleted and added text.>**

2. Evidence of appropriate background checks, certifications and proof of completion of applicable trainings including abuse prevention and dismantling racism and achieving racial justice and healing trainings;

<Proposed amended resolution text showing exact changes being made:>

2. Evidence of appropriate background checks, certifications and proof of completion of applicable trainings including abuse prevention and anti-racism dismantling racism and achieving racial justice and healing trainings;

And be it further

Resolved, That Canon III.8.5.h.4 be amended to read as follows and voted on at the 81st General Convention:

<Amended text as it would appear if adopted and concurred. Scroll below the line of asterisks (***) to see the version showing all deleted and added text.>**

4.the Church's teaching on dismantling racism and achieving racial justice and healing;

<Proposed amended resolution text showing exact changes being made:>

4.the Church's teaching on racism dismantling racism and achieving racial justice and healing;

And be it further

Resolved, That Canon III.9.13.a.2 be amended to read as follows and voted on at the 81st General Convention:

<Amended text as it would appear if adopted and concurred. Scroll below the line of asterisks (***) to see the version showing all deleted and added text.>**

2. Evidence of appropriate background checks, certifications and proof of completion of applicable trainings including abuse prevention and dismantling racism and achieving racial justice and healing trainings;

<Proposed amended resolution text showing exact changes being made:>

2. Evidence of appropriate background checks, certifications and proof of completion of applicable trainings including abuse prevention and anti-racism dismantling racism and achieving racial justice and healing trainings;

And be it further

Resolved, That Canon III.10.1.c.4 be amended to read as follows and voted on at the 81st General Convention:

<Amended text as it would appear if adopted and concurred. Scroll below the line of asterisks (***) to see the version showing all deleted and added text.>**

4.training regarding the Church’s teaching on dismantling racism and achieving racial justice and healing;

<Proposed amended resolution text showing exact changes being made:>

4.training regarding the Church’s teaching on racism dismantling racism and achieving racial justice and healing;

And be it further

Resolved, That Canon III.12.8.a.2 be amended to read as follows and voted on at the 81st General Convention:

<Amended text as it would appear if adopted and concurred. Scroll below the line of asterisks (***) to see the version showing all deleted and added text.>**

2. Evidence of appropriate background checks, certifications and proof of completion of applicable trainings including abuse prevention and dismantling racism and achieving racial justice and healing trainings;

<Proposed amended resolution text showing exact changes being made:>

2. Evidence of appropriate background checks, certifications and proof of completion of applicable trainings including abuse prevention and anti-racism dismantling racism and achieving racial justice and healing trainings;

Explanation

In 2018, the Episcopal Church made a significant shift in its language and approach to address issues of racial justice and equality. This change involved moving from the use of the term "anti-racism" to the term "dismantling racism and achieving racial justice and healing" as outlined in resolution 2018 B004 Urge Common Terminology to Describe Anti-Racism passed at the General Convention of the Episcopal Church and the Episcopate of Bishop Michael Curry. This shift reflects a nuanced evolution in the understanding of addressing racial inequalities and promoting inclusivity within the context of the church and society as a whole. Our Canons need to reflect this change as a way to make it widely known that the Church is committed to living into this broader work.

Resolution 2018-B004 recognizes that the term "anti-racism" has been widely used to describe efforts aimed at dismantling systemic racism and prejudice. However, it was recognized that the term could sometimes carry connotations of opposition or confrontation, which might not fully capture the holistic and transformative nature of the work needed to address racial disparities.

The adoption of the term "dismantling racism and achieving racial justice and healing" signifies a broader and more encompassing approach to addressing racial issues. "Dismantling racism and achieving racial justice and healing" implies not just combating racism, but actively working towards healing, understanding, and creating a sense of unity among diverse communities. This approach acknowledges the painful history of racial oppression and seeks to engage in a process of acknowledgment, repentance, forgiveness, and healing.

The shift to the term "dismantling racism and achieving racial justice and healing" also aligns with the Episcopal Church's understanding of its mission and values. The church sees itself as a community of faith that is called to promote justice, compassion, and reconciliation in the world. By using the term "reconciliation," the church underscores its commitment to fostering mutual understanding, dialogue, and collaboration among individuals and communities that have been historically divided by racial disparities.

Resolution 2018-B004 signifies the Episcopal Church's desire to move beyond surface-level activism and confront the deeper roots of racial injustice. The adoption of the term "dismantling racism and achieving racial justice and healing" highlights the church's dedication to addressing historical injustices, promoting healing, and building relationships of trust and respect among all its members. It is worth noting that this change in terminology does not negate the importance of actively opposing racism. Instead, it emphasizes that the work of addressing racial disparities involves more than just opposing racism; it entails

fostering genuine relationships, acknowledging shared humanity, and seeking common ground for the sake of a more just and inclusive society.



Resolution Number: 2022-A131
Title: Urge Episcopalians Utilize the Phrase "People of Color"
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

*Resolved, That the 80th General Convention urge all Episcopalians to utilize the phrase **People of Color** when referring to individuals and communities marginalized by racism and white supremacy; and be it further*

Resolved, That when referring to a smaller group of people that share a historical, cultural, or ethnic identity, we commit to using the specific terms and names that those groups have widely embraced for themselves in our documents and church communications.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Baltimore, 2022* (New York: General Convention, 2023), p. 771.



Resolution Number: 2018-B004
Title: Urge Common Terminology to Describe Anti-Racism Work
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Substituted
Final Text:

Resolved, That this 79th General Convention affirms that we condemn racism in all its forms, institutional, systemic, and personal, and we encourage all task forces, commissions, committees, parishes, centers and individuals in The Episcopal Church involved in the work of dismantling racism and seeking to foster racial healing, justice, and reconciliation to expand the language used to designate or describe that work; and be it further

Resolved, That there continues to be important work needed to confront institutional and systemic racism in many settings and communities before there can be further work in healing, justice and reconciliation; and be it further

Resolved, That there is also important work being done to begin such healing, justice, and reconciliation; and be it further

Resolved, That we recognize and affirm that the language around such work is critical to our ability to communicate our purposes with others engaging in this work within the Church and across other organizations; therefore be it further

Resolved, That the terms to be utilized to describe such work should include Dismantling Racism and Racial Healing, Justice and Reconciliation.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Austin, 2018* (New York: General Convention, 2018), p. 670.