

General Convention of The Episcopal Church 2024 Archives' Research Report

Resolution No.: 2024-A082
Title: Support the Episcopal Veterans Network
Proposer: Standing Commission on World Mission
Topic: Pastoral Care

Directly Related: (Attached)

2015-A047 Address Moral and Spiritual Healing from Traumatic Stress Injuries
2009-C051 Support Care and Fellowship for Veterans

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

2018-A286 Condemn Discharge of Non-Citizens from Military
2015-C020 Increase Ministry and Mission to the Mentally Ill

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](#).

A082 - Support the Episcopal Veterans Network

Final Status: Not Yet Finalized

Proposed by: Standing Commission on World Mission

Has Budget Implications: Yes

Cost: \$90,000.00

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

Resolved, the House of _____ concurring,

That the 81st General Convention acknowledge and recognize the burgeoning Episcopal Veterans Network which is a volunteer initiative within and beyond the Episcopal Church to minister to the material, mental, social and spiritual needs of veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces and their families; and be it further

Resolved, That General Convention recognize that the Episcopal Veterans Network is to be governed by a volunteer steering committee of diverse clergy and lay people, in coordination with the Standing Commission on World Mission, the Office of the Suffragan Bishop for Armed Forces and Federal Ministries and other church bodies which may intersect with this work; and be it further

Resolved, That General Convention encourage all parishes, dioceses, and jurisdictions to become familiar with the Episcopal Veteran's Network and its resources in order to better serve the veterans in their communities; and be it further

Resolved, That General Convention request a budget allocation of \$90,000 for a part-time coordinator to oversee EVN and for support of other costs associated with the growth of EVN.

Explanation

Following their honorable service in Korea, Vietnam, Afghanistan, Iraq and other conflicts of living memory, countless veterans are suffering from loneliness, homelessness, alienation, discrimination, depression, and other physical and emotional ills. Too many are also afflicted with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and, in particular “moral injury,” an increasingly recognized form of PTSD involving the wounding of veterans’ souls resulting from the ethically wrenching combat experiences they have witnessed or engaged in.

The Episcopal Veterans Network is being launched under the auspices of the Standing Commission on World Mission (SCWM), building upon the Commission’s recent work to provide additional educational resources to military chaplains in coordination with the Office of the Suffragan Bishop for Armed Forces and Federal Ministries (AFFM).

By elevating the unique pastoral, liturgical, and prophetic charisms of our church, and our special, historic relationship with the U.S. military, the goal of this network is to facilitate greater life-enhancing, life-healing, and even life-saving care for veterans who identify with The Episcopal Church. Many veterans lack the awareness and wherewithal to find the fellowship and assistance they need to overcome these challenges and avoid heartbreaking outcomes, including substance abuse, domestic violence, and suicide in shocking numbers. The Episcopal Church has much to offer to these hurting veterans and their loved ones, and many congregations, especially those near military bases and communities, are already engaged in thriving ministries to this substantial segment of our membership.

Initially, the Episcopal Veteran’s Network (EVN) will focus on several pillars, including:

- Helping point veterans toward existing public, private, volunteer, and religious resources that can help them access the services, benefits and care they have earned and deserve.
- Organizing and connecting the church’s congregations, dioceses, provinces, commissions, and partner organizations around this critical mission.
- Developing and instituting liturgies and other worship resources devoted to veterans and their unique spiritual needs.
- Marshalling and sharing best practices for veterans’ outreach and care from within and beyond the Episcopal Church.

EVN aims to complement and amplify these good works and those of the Veterans Administration, Military Chaplains Association, and other governmental and non-profit service organizations, by helping connect more hands and hearts with our nation’s under-cared-for veterans.

In addition to the funding requested by this resolution, EVN will seek grants, contributions and donations from supportive bishops, congregations, agencies and organizations. All of these resources will be devoted to supporting a part-time clerical director; launching and maintaining a resource-rich website; engaging partner congregations and communities, including participating in relevant conferences and gatherings; and developing liturgies and programming in conjunction with church authorities.



Resolution Number: 2015-A047
Title: Address Moral and Spiritual Healing from Traumatic Stress Injuries
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Substituted
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 78th General Convention of The Episcopal Church call the Church to a triennium of pastoral care and Christian formation that is focused upon those whose lives have been directly and indirectly impacted by exposure to traumatic events related to global and domestic terrorism, the violence of warfare, and displacement through natural and man-made disasters, to address the effects of massive and chronic exposure to these particular expressions of violence and global chaos; and be it further

Resolved, That a consortium be formed among the of the Office of Global Partnerships; the Office of the Bishop Suffragan for the Armed Forces and Federal Ministries; the Office of Diversity, Social, and Environmental Ministries; and Episcopal Migration Ministries, along with representatives of the Church appointed by the Executive Council, to consult with relevant experts in the field, to collect and make available relevant resources, and to coordinate communication among a wide network of ministries focused upon healing from traumatic stress injuries related to warfare, terrorism, and population displacement; and be it further

Resolved, That the same consortium make available to military chaplains, parish clergy, and lay ministers resources and training specific to helping them address the needs of uniformed men and women of the armed forces and of veterans who either continue to be directly or virtually involved in global combat engagements or who are returning from service with “spiritual and moral injuries;” and be it further

Resolved, That the same consortium work with Anglican Communion partners and with migration and refugee organizations to develop or disseminate resources for the relief of traumatic stress and to promote spiritual healing for women, men, and children who are affected by terrorist organizations that continue to be intent on harming innocent, non-combatant populations through intimidation, recruitment, physical violence, and geographic displacement; who are the non-combatant victims of military engagements; or who are the subjects of population displacements due to terrorism, military combat, or large scale environmental disasters.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Salt Lake City, 2015* (New York: General Convention, 2015), p. 836.



Resolution Number: 2009-C051
Title: Support Care and Fellowship for Veterans
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 76th General Convention encourage its clergy, members, congregations and agencies to:

1. **Educate themselves about the health-care and economic needs of our nation's military personnel and veterans who have been wounded, physically or emotionally, in the current wars in Afghanistan, Iraq, or in other wars, past or future.**
2. **Call on our nation's Department of Veteran Affairs Medical System and the U.S. Government to continue to give the best possible care to our veterans, and to shorten the time required for our soldiers to receive approval for medical care and other benefits, which they have earned through their military service.**
3. **Take direct action to improve the lives of wounded soldiers in their communities and, when asked, to advocate on their behalf with government agencies.**
4. **Seek to build caring pastoral relationships with wounded soldiers in their families, congregations, communities or local hospitals.**
5. **Encourage the establishment of an Episcopal Veterans Fellowship for each diocese.**
6. **Encourage local congregations to establish an annual healing service for wounded military personnel, veterans and others.**

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Anaheim, 2009* (New York: General Convention, 2009), pp. 535-536.