

General Convention of The Episcopal Church 2024 Archives' Research Report

Resolution No.: 2024-A083
Title: Affirm Anglican Connections
Proposer: Standing Commission on World Mission
Topic: Anglican Communion, Ecumenism

Directly Related: (Attached)

2022-A056 Appoint a Task Force on Communion Across Difference
2018-A038 Affirm Commitment to Anglican Communion and Inter-Anglican Secretariat
2018-A227 Create a Task Force on Communion Across Difference
2015-A019 Affirm an Ongoing Commitment to the Anglican Communion
2015-A114 Honor Financial Commitments in Covenant and Bilateral Agreements
2012-A109 Recognize and Fund Covenant Relationships
2012-B005 Continue Commitment to the Anglican Covenant Process
2012-D008 Reaffirm Commitment to and Participation in the Anglican Communion
2009-A074 Adopt a Theological Statement on Interreligious Relations
2009-D020 Commend and Report on the Proposed Anglican Covenant
2009-D025 Reaffirm Participation in the Anglican Communion and Acknowledge Differences
2006-A159 Affirm Commitment to the Anglican Communion
2006-A166 Support Development of an Anglican Covenant
2003-A109 Support Participation in the International Anglican Liturgical Consultation
2000-A129 Direct the Executive Council to Develop Relationships with Overseas Dioceses
2000-C006 Address Urban Mission in the U.S. and in the Anglican Communion
2000-C009 Celebrate the Anglican Communion and Affirm Understanding of Authority

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

2018-A115 Adopt the Anglican Communion Charter for Safety
2015-A050 Refer a Resolution on the ACC Charter for Safety (Referred)
2009-A125 On the Topic of Establishing an Anglican Communion Task Force (Rejected)
2006-A126 On the Topic of Studying and Applying *A Covenant for Communion in Mission* (Rejected)
2006-A160 Express Regret for Straining the Bonds of the Church
2006-A165 Commend the Windsor Report and Commit to the "Windsor Process"
2009-D025 Reaffirm Participation in the Anglican Communion and Acknowledge Differences
2003-D009 Support 2008 Anglican Gathering
2000-C043 Affirm and Endorse The Cambridge Accord
1991-A234 Support in Principle an Anglican Conference on Christian Mission

1991-D041 Implement 1988 Lambeth Resolution No.040 on the Environment
1988-A185 Urge Participation in the Companion Diocese Program
1979-D007 Adopt Lambeth Conference Resolution on War and Violence
1976-A101 Reaffirm Commitment to Financial Arrangements With Other Anglican Churches

Supplemental Documents: (Linked)

Anglican Consultative Council, [ACC-18 Resolutions](#), February 2023.

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](#).

A083 - Affirm Anglican Connections

Final Status: Not Yet Finalized

Proposed by: Standing Commission on World Mission

Has Budget Implications: No

Cost:

Amends C&C or Rules of Order: No

Requests New Interim Body: No

Changes Mandate Of Existing Ib: No

Directs Dfms Staff: No

Directs Dioceses: No

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 affirm our continued relationship with the broader Anglican Communion as reflected through the work of the Anglican Consultative Council and the other Instruments of Communion; and be it further

Resolved, That General Convention give thanks for, and encourage participation in, the many networks which exist in the Anglican Communion such as in the areas of youth, family, indigenous, peace and justice, women, environment, health and community, safe church, interfaith concerns, church planting and colleges and universities; and be it further

Resolved, That General Convention affirm the need to continue to work across theological, cultural and social differences, and encourage that all Episcopal leaders take time to consider the proposal from the Inter-Anglican Standing Commission on Faith, Unity and Order (IASCFUO) presented at the meeting of the Anglican Consultative Council (ACC-18) in February 2023; and be it further

Resolved, That General Convention encourage the use of the Anglican Cycle of Prayer Calendar issued by the Anglican Communion Office across the Episcopal Church thus uniting Anglicans around the world in prayer.

Explanation

As the first sentence in the Constitution of the Episcopal Church's states: "The Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America, otherwise known as The Episcopal Church (which name is hereby recognized as also designating the Church), is a constituent member of the Anglican Communion, a Fellowship within the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church, of those duly constituted Dioceses, Provinces, and regional Churches in communion with the See of Canterbury, upholding and propagating the historic Faith and Order as set forth in the Book of Common Prayer."

The Anglican Communion is a family of 42 autonomous and independent-yet-interdependent national, pan-national and regional churches in communion with the See of Canterbury. All of these provinces are guided by recommendations from the four Instruments: the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Lambeth Conference, the Primates' Meeting and the Anglican Consultative Council.

As constituent members of the Anglican Communion, it is imperative that The Episcopal Church – as individuals, dioceses, and the Church—affirm our support of the Anglican Communion as set forth in this resolution. To be in relationship does not necessitate complete agreement on all issues. Rather, the voice of The Episcopal Church is vital in upholding and advocating for the values of God's liberating love throughout the world.



Resolution Number: 2022-A056
Title: Appoint a Task Force on Communion Across Difference
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 80th General Convention directs the Presiding Bishop and President of the House of Deputies to appoint a second Task Force on Communion Across Difference to continue the work started but limited by the COVID-19 pandemic, consisting of not more than 12 people, who represent the cultural, generational, racial, ethnic and theological diversity in the Church, including especially members from dioceses outside the United States; and be it further

Resolved, That half of the members appointed hold that marriage is a “covenant between a man and a woman” (BCP, 422), half hold that marriage is a “covenant between two people” in the presence of God (Resolution 2018-A085), and that all of those appointed seek a pathway toward mutual flourishing in The Episcopal Church; and be it further

Resolved, That the Task Force will seek to build on the Blue Book report of the previous triennium, continuing to seek a lasting path forward for mutual flourishing consistent with this Church’s polity and the 2015 “Communion across Difference” statement of the House of Bishops, affirming (1) the clear decision of General Convention that Christian marriage is a covenant open to two people of the same sex or of the opposite sex, (2) General Convention’s firm commitment to make provision for all couples asking to be married in this Church to have access to authorized liturgies; and also affirming (3) the indispensable place that the minority who hold to this Church’s historic teaching on marriage have in our common life, whose witness our Church needs; and be it further

Resolved, That the Task Force develop and publicize further tools for engaging the members of this Church in the substance of the Task Force on Communion Across Difference Blue Book Report to this Convention, including but not limited to videos documenting experiences across this Church that demonstrate positive examples of communion across difference, and materials that broaden the conversation beyond matters of human sexuality and marriage; and be it further

Resolved, That the Task Force consult widely with members of this Church who represent its diversity of cultural background, age, race, gender, gender identity, and sexual orientation, particularly its members in countries other than the United States; and also with representatives from the Anglican Communion, our full-communion ecumenical partners, and those churches with whom we carry on ecumenical dialogues; and be it further

Resolved, That the 80th General Convention commends to dioceses, parishes, and churchwide staff the Conversation Tool created by the Task Force on Communion Across Difference included in the Supplemental Materials section of their Blue Book report to this Convention; and be it further

Resolved, That the Task Force report and make recommendations to the 81th General Convention, ending its term at that time except by further action of General Convention; 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 \$75,000 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. 778-779.



Resolution Number: 2018-A038

Title: Affirm Commitment to Anglican Communion and Inter-Anglican Secretariat

Legislative Action Taken: Concurred

Final Text:

Resolved, That through our funding and active participation, this Church continues to bear witness to this Church's ongoing commitment to the Anglican Communion and the work of the Inter-Anglican Secretariat (Anglican Communion Office).

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Austin, 2018* (New York: General Convention, 2018), p. 853.



Resolution Number: 2018-A227
Title: Create a Task Force on Communion Across Difference
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 79th General Convention direct the Presiding Bishop and the President of the House of Deputies to appoint jointly a Task Force on Communion across Difference, consisting of not more than 14 people, who represent the diversity in this Church including members from countries other than the United States; and be it further

Resolved, That half of the members appointed hold that marriage is a “covenant between a man and a woman” (BCP, 422), half of whom hold that marriage is a “covenant between two people” (Resolution 2018-A085), in the presence of God , and that all of those appointed seek a pathway toward mutual flourishing in The Episcopal Church; and be it further

Resolved, That the Task Force seek a lasting path forward for mutual flourishing consistent with this Church’s polity and the 2015 “Communion across Difference” statement of the House of Bishops affirming (1) the clear decision of General Convention that Christian marriage is a covenant between two people, of the same sex or of the opposite sex, (2) General Convention’s firm commitment to make provision for all couples asking to be married in this Church to have access to authorized liturgies; and also affirming (3) the indispensable place that the minority who hold to this Church’s historic teaching on marriage have in our common life, whose witness the Church needs; and be it further

Resolved, That the Task Force consult widely with members of this Church who represent its diversity of cultural background, age, race, gender, gender identity, and sexual orientation, particularly its members in countries other than the United States, and also with representatives reflecting the diversity of views and voices of the Anglican Communion, our full-communication ecumenical partners, and those churches with whom we carry on ecumenical dialogues; and be it further

Resolved, That the Task Force report and make recommendations to the 80th General Convention, ending its term at that time except by further action of General Convention; 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 \$75,000 for the implementation of this resolution.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Austin, 2018* (New York: General Convention, 2018), pp. 1037-1038.



Resolution Number: 2015-A019
Title: Affirm an Ongoing Commitment to the Anglican Communion
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 78th General Convention of The Episcopal Church affirm our common identity and membership in the Anglican Communion; and be it further

Resolved, That the 78th General Convention direct The Episcopal Church's members of the Anglican Consultative Council to express our appreciation to the 16th meeting of the Anglican Consultative Council (ACC16, Lusaka 2016) for the gift of Inter-Anglican conversation and partnership in God's mission; and be it further

Resolved, That The Episcopal Church affirm its ongoing commitment to the Anglican Communion and the work of the Inter-Anglican Secretariat through our funding and active participation.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Salt Lake City, 2015* (New York: General Convention, 2015), p. 432.



Resolution Number: 2015-A114
Title: Honor Financial Commitments in Covenant and Bilateral Agreements
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 78th General Convention of The Episcopal Church, in continuing to honor its financial and other commitments undertaken as part of its covenant and bilateral agreements with other provinces and dioceses of the Anglican Communion, will not reduce those financial commitments in any general, percentage-based reduction of the budget of the General Convention; and be it further

Resolved, That if these covenant and bilateral agreements permit, and if financial exigencies require a reduction in funding by the General Convention or Executive Council, consultation and notice of any reductions will be made immediately to our covenant or bilateral partners as well as to the members of the covenant or bilateral committees; and be it further

Resolved, That the policy of The Episcopal Church is to honor fully our financial commitments under our covenant or bilateral agreements.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Salt Lake City, 2015* (New York: General Convention, 2015), p. 790.



Resolution Number: 2012-A109
Title: Recognize and Fund Covenant Relationships
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Substituted
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 77th General Convention of The Episcopal Church recognize and honor the significant and important relationships between The Episcopal Church and its mission partners that have been nurtured over many years and formalized in various written covenantal and bilateral agreements with other provinces and dioceses of the Anglican Communion; and be it further

Resolved, That the 77th General Convention strongly encourage the Committee of Program, Budget and Finance to fulfill our covenant agreements in its budget deliberations.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Indianapolis, 2012* (New York: General Convention, 2012), pp. 253-254.



Resolution Number: 2012-B005
Title: Continue Commitment to the Anglican Covenant Process
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Substituted
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 77th General Convention express its gratitude to those who so faithfully worked at producing and responding to the proposed Anglican Covenant (www.anglicancommunion.org/commission/covenant/final/text.cfm); and be it further

Resolved, That the 77th General Convention acknowledge that following extensive study and prayerful consideration of the Anglican Covenant there remain a wide variety of opinions and ecclesiological positions in The Episcopal Church; and be it further

Resolved, That as a pastoral response to The Episcopal Church, the General Convention decline to take a position on the Anglican Covenant at this convention; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention ask the Presiding Officers to appoint a task force of Executive Council (Blue Book, 637) to continue to monitor the ongoing developments with respect to the Anglican Covenant and how this church might continue its participation; and be it further

Resolved, That the Executive Council task force on the Anglican Covenant report its findings and recommendations to the 78th General Convention.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Indianapolis, 2012* (New York: General Convention, 2012), pp. 241-242.



Resolution Number: 2012-D008
Title: Reaffirm Commitment to and Participation in the Anglican Communion
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Substituted
Final Text:

Resolved, That The 77th General Convention express its profound gratitude to those who so faithfully work at encouraging dialogue within the diversity of the Anglican Communion; and be it further

Resolved, That we celebrate the great blessing of the Anglican Communion in its diversity within community as autonomous churches in relationship bound together in our differences in service to God's mission; and be it further

Resolved, That we hold fast and reaffirm our historic commitment to and constituent membership in the Anglican Communion as expressed in the Preamble of the Constitution of The Episcopal Church; and be it further

Resolved, That The Episcopal Church maintain and reinforce strong links across the world-wide Anglican Communion committing itself to continued participation in the wider councils of the Anglican Communion; and be it further

Resolved, That The Episcopal Church deepen its involvement with Communion ministries and networks using where applicable the Continuing Indaba process: conversations across differences to strengthen relationships in God's mission (<http://www.anglicancommunion.org/ministry/continuingindaba> and www.continuingindaba.com); and be it further

Resolved, That The 77th General Convention encourage dioceses, congregations and individual members of The Episcopal Church to educate themselves about the Communion as well as promote and support the Anglican Communion and its work.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Indianapolis, 2012* (New York: General Convention, 2012), p. 241.



Resolution Number: 2009-A074
Title: Adopt a Theological Statement on Interreligious Relations
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Substituted and Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 76th General Convention of The Episcopal Church adopt the following statement as a foundation upon which it engages in interreligious dialogue; and be it further Resolved, That this statement be commended to dioceses and congregations and shared with our ecumenical and interreligious partners.

1. **I. Introduction**

1. We affirm the foundational Gospel proclamation that “Jesus is Lord” (I Corinthians 12:3 NRSV here and hereafter), and therefore Jesus’ Summary of God’s Law: “love the Lord your God with all your hearts, with all your souls, and with all your minds, and to love your neighbor as yourself” (Mark 12:29-31; BCP, Catechism, page 851). For this reason we reach out in love and genuine openness to know and to understand those of other religions.

Therefore, we commend to all our members: dialogue for building relationships, the sharing of information, religious education and celebration with people of other religions as part of Christian life,

- 1. dialogue begins when people meet each other
- 2. dialogue depends upon mutual understanding, mutual respect and mutual trust
- 3. dialogue makes it possible to share in service to the community
- 4. dialogue is a medium of authentic witness by all parties and not an opportunity for proselytizing.

We believe that such dialogue may be a contribution toward helping people of different religions grow in mutual understanding and making common cause in peacemaking, social justice and religious liberty. We further encourage dioceses, congregations and other organizations of The Episcopal Church to initiate such dialogue in partnership with other Christian Churches and in consultation with other provinces of the Communion, where appropriate.

2. As we engage other religious traditions, our work must be grounded in thoughtful exploration of and reflection on the appropriate ways to profess Christianity in the context of other religious traditions. This document is an initial reflection on why we are participating in multi-religious relationships. It explores the contexts for doing so and seeks to discern the unique contribution of The Episcopal Church to such relationships. As Christians we celebrate and affirm our witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ. “He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation” (Colossians 1:15). We rejoice in our call to spread the good news of God’s love and reconciliation through engaging in life-enhancing relationships with all of God’s people.

1. **II. Historical Context**

3. The Episcopal Church and the Anglican Communion have had a long interest and involvement in interreligious matters, which have historically been addressed in the context of mission. Prominent Episcopalians were involved in the first World Parliament of Religions in 1893. The Episcopal Church and Anglican Communion were well represented at the 1910 Edinburgh Missionary Conference, which was called to discuss cooperation in the global

mission field and gave birth to the modern ecumenical movement. In the decades that followed, the Anglican Communion and The Episcopal Church were influenced by the important theologies of mission developed by John V. Taylor (Bishop of Winchester and General Secretary of the Church Mission Society) and Lesslie Newbigin (a minister of the Church of Scotland and later a Bishop in the Church of South India). In The Episcopal Church, engagement with Native American culture has resulted in the establishment of significant missionary presence in certain areas.

4. The groundbreaking 1965 document from Vatican Council II, *Nostra Aetate (In Our Time)*, helped to inaugurate a new era of dialogue between Christians and those of other religions. In the Anglican Communion, the 1988 Lambeth Conference issued a major report commending dialogue with people of other faiths as part of Christian discipleship and mission. It also produced the first Anglican Communion document on dialogue with Abrahamic traditions, “Jews, Christians and Muslims: The Way of Dialogue.” This document was recommended for study; and the Provinces were asked to initiate talks wherever possible on a tripartite basis with both Jews and Muslims. Other important resources we have used here include “Generous Love: the Truth of the Gospel and the Call to Dialogue,” issued in 2008 by the Network for Interfaith Concerns (NIFCON) of the Anglican Communion; the Archbishop of Canterbury’s 2007 reply to “A Common Word,” an overture from Muslim scholars for dialogue with Christians; and “Relations with Other World Religions,” Section F of the 2008 Lambeth Conference Indaba Reflections.

5. The Episcopal Church’s primary participation in interreligious dialogue has taken several forms:

- Ecumenical efforts with other Christians, through the Interfaith Relations Commission of the National Council of Churches of Christ. The 1999 Assembly of the National Council of Churches unanimously approved a policy statement giving a theological rationale for participating in interreligious dialogue.
- International efforts through the Anglican Communion Office, including the Network for Interfaith Concerns.
- Particular initiatives taken by the Presiding Bishop as primate and chief pastor of the church.
- Task force initiatives, first the Presiding Bishop’s Advisory Committee on Interfaith Relations (through 1997) and then the Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations (from 1997-2003).
- Diocesan, congregational and individual efforts in peace making and interreligious dialogue.

6. In addition, in response to the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, Episcopal Relief and Development funded the Interfaith Education Initiative, a three-year program in conjunction with the Office of Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations that surveyed the interfaith work of The Episcopal Church and developed educational resources for interreligious dialogue. This project culminated in a conference held at Washington National Cathedral in 2004, and in the publication of the “IEI Manual on Interfaith Dialogue.”

7. In 2003, the General Convention officially located oversight of the church’s interreligious work with the Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations, which was renamed the Standing Commission on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations (SCEIR).

• III. Current Context

8. As the Indaba Reflections from Lambeth note, “The contexts within which the Church ministers around the world vary widely and the potential for interfaith dialogue will vary

accordingly” (§ 93). The following paragraphs are an attempt to note some of the ways in which our context informs our approach to interreligious relations.

9. Today the picture of the world we have to carry is of the earth seen from space. Borders and boundaries are fluid, easily fractured and unstable. The peoples of the earth will either survive together or perish together. Paradoxically our entire world is, at the same time, housed inside the flat screens of computers that provide immediate access to almost anyone or anything at anytime, anywhere on the planet. Crises and conflicts that were once local matters and seemed to be none of our concern are now global. Social strife, political upheaval and violence—predominantly fueled by greed and/or religious fanaticism—are not distant from us.

10. In the United States, the naive image of the world as a safe and stable place was shattered on September 11, 2001. Those killed in the attacks on the World Trade Center in New York came from many lands, prayed in many languages, called God by many names. They are a true microcosm of the shifting reality of who lives in the United States today, citizens and foreign nationals alike. For the first time in decades, people in the United States experienced what other people in other lands have experienced for generations: fear, grief and loss following from an assault on their homeland, the devastation of their people and the shattering of a sense of well being. While grief and loss are certainly appropriate, fear is the opposite of truth, and fear has led some people of all religions to collude with, participate in and justify political acts of violence and oppression which dishonor all concepts of the Sacred.

11. As Episcopalians, we recognize that our neighbors come from a variety of different beliefs and backgrounds, and we are unfamiliar with many of if not most of them. Christians continue to struggle to find common ground and mutual respect with Jews and Muslims who are fellow children of Abraham. Whether we intend to or not, we impact and are impacted in return—powerfully and profoundly—by each other’s lives, cultures and beliefs. For each of us, the neighbor often seems to be the Other rather than the one whom Christ calls us to receive as a gift and to love as we would be loved ourselves.

12. In contemporary local and global contexts, The Episcopal Church faces crucial opportunities and challenges for developing new creative relationships with people of other religious heritages. Throughout the world, people of different religions can be seen searching for compatible if not common ways toward justice, peace and sustainable life. Our theological and ecclesial heritage offers significant resources for participating in this global quest.

• IV. Scripture, Reason and Tradition as Resources in Interreligious Dialogue

13. As part of the Anglican Communion, The Episcopal Church seeks to be a community living in obedience to the Word of God revealed through Scripture, and to identify the contemporary message of that Word through bringing the insights of tradition and reason, to theological reflection on interreligious relations.

Scripture and Reason

14. We understand the Holy Scriptures to be inspired by the Holy Spirit of God and at the same time the work of human authors, editors and compilers. “All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction and for training in righteousness” (2 Timothy 3:16). The Scriptures “contain all things necessary for salvation” (BCP, 513). In the Scriptures we discover the nature of God, by their witness to Jesus Christ, in their record of his teaching and through their proclamation of the Good News of God’s Reign for all people. We believe the Holy Spirit continues to guide us in our growing understanding of the Scriptures, which are always to be interpreted in the widest possible context of God’s redeeming love for all people. Throughout our history, Episcopalians have wrestled with varying interpretations of the Scriptures. Such differences are to be expected and appreciated

as a direct consequence of our dynamic relationship with the Word of God and our experience of faith over time.

15. Christianity's Holy Scriptures reveal to us both the invitation and the direction to engage with people of other religions. In Genesis 1:26 we meet the loving God who created all people and all nations, and the awesome majesty of creation bids us humbly acknowledge that the fullness of God's intention is beyond the scope of our limited understanding; God's gracious love is not confined to the Christian community alone. Because of our faith in the incarnation of God in Jesus Christ, we expect to meet God in our neighbor, whom God commands us to love as we love ourselves (Mark 12:29-31).

16. The sixteenth-century Anglican theologian Richard Hooker helped form our tradition of Scriptural interpretation. In his major work, *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*, Hooker argued that the Holy Spirit requires the church to use Reason to interpret scripture. For Hooker, the Scriptures reveal to us essential truths about God and ourselves that we cannot learn by any other means. In other matters of human life, God expects us to use our minds in order to reason together and thus discover, through conversation, debate and argument, the right way forward. This requires respect for the opinions of other people of good will.

17. This Biblically-based respect for the diversity of understandings that authentic, truth-seeking human beings have is essential for communal reasoning and faithful living. The revelation of God in Christ calls us therefore to participate in our relationship with God and one another in a manner that is at once faithful, loving, lively and reasonable. This understanding continues to call Episcopalians to find our way as one body through various conflicts. It is not a unity of opinion or a sameness of vision that holds us together. Rather, it is the belief that we are called to walk together in Jesus' path of reconciliation not only through our love for the other, but also through our respect for the legitimacy of the reasoning of the other. Respect for reason empowers us to meet God's unfolding world as active participants in the building of the Kingdom and to greet God's diverse people with appropriate welcome and gracious hospitality.

Tradition

18. Tradition is also an important aspect of Anglican theological understanding. As Anglicans we have always understood ourselves to be in continuity with the Catholic faith reaching back to the ancient, patristic church; we therefore hold the church's tradition in high regard. Anglicans have used tradition to inform our common reasoning as the church responds to new challenges and developments, using accumulated wisdom to show how similar challenges have been met in the past. For example, the English Reformers allowed tradition to shape the reformation of the Christianity they had received. Similarly, the founders of The Episcopal Church also placed great emphasis in tradition by continuing important beliefs and practices of the Church of England, such as its liturgy and ministry, and adapting them to the new context of the American republic, as in the American revival of the ancient practice of electing bishops. Tradition informed and shaped how Anglicans in these contexts responded to new situations.

19. Historically The Episcopal Church encountered religious pluralism and engaged in interreligious relations in the context of the foreign mission field. In many cases this work was the product of dedicated missionaries called to spread the Gospel in faithfulness to the Great Commission. We are also aware that in many cases this work went hand in hand with American expansionism in a combination of mission and empire. We need no better example than the ship sent to the newly-conquered Philippines that carried William Howard Taft as appointed governor and Charles Henry Brent as missionary bishop. We are shaped by these traditions: we are inspired by the energy, engagement and faithfulness to the Gospel exhibited

in the Anglican missionary engagement. Yet we recognize the need to be aware of the socio-religious implications of mission.

20. In turn, we hope that these examples from our history will help to shape future interreligious relationships. We pray for the same energy, engagement and faithfulness to the Gospel that the Anglican missionary traditions display. We hope that these traditions will in turn shape our future relationships as missional ones of dialogue and companionship. “Companions in Transformation,” the official Global Mission vision statement adopted at the 2003 General Convention, emphasizes the importance of dialogue and companionship in engagement with other religious traditions. We believe the theological principles articulated there are also part of creating new traditions in interreligious relations, informed in classic Anglican fashion by our past.

21. We believe that interreligious work will carry forth God’s intention for God’s creation. It will provide us the opportunity to reflect the love of God we know through our redemption through the Incarnation of Christ; and it will provide us with the opportunity to build faithful communities that live out the majesty of God’s will for the earth with more depth and in more forms than we currently experience within the limitations of our own rich religious community. And we believe that Episcopalians find our best resources in our historic understandings of Scripture, reason and tradition to engage in this work of transformation.

• V. Salvation in Christ and Interreligious Relations

22. The most sensitive aspects of interreligious relations concerns any religion’s claims to unique or exclusive authority or revelation, including Christian traditions and teachings such as the incarnation, cross and the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Christians affirm that God “has created all men and women in his image, and he wishes all to enjoy that fullness of life in his presence which we know as salvation” (*Generous Love*, Section 1). We also recognize that our efforts toward this goal are futile without the assistance of God in Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit. We are dependent on the grace of God—God’s unconditional, undeserved love for those God has made. The source of salvation is God alone. Christians believe salvation comes through Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

23. As Christians “we are saved by grace through faith, and this is not our own doing, but the gift of God, not the result of works so that no one may boast. For we are what God has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God has prepared beforehand to be our way of life” (Ephesians 2: 8-10). In various ways, language of salvation refers to a form of deliverance from sin and the finiteness of this life as we experience it, with all its hardships and joys. Our hope of salvation expresses our expectation that we shall share in the life of God, and do so not only after death, but now.

24. The Christian scriptures proclaim that Jesus is “the Word made flesh” (John 1:14) and as such he is “the Way and the Truth and the Life” (John 14:6). As stated in our creeds (Apostles’ and Nicene) and liturgy, Jesus Christ is the full revelation of God. Since God has chosen to share our life, we affirm that God is intensely concerned about every human life. Among Christians, Episcopalians have a particular appreciation of this teaching, in that we believe that the coming of God in Christ has already begun to transform all of creation.

25. The human response to God’s incarnate love was “to crucify the Lord of Glory” (1 Corinthians 2:8). The cross is the Christian symbol and act of selfemptying, humility, redemptive suffering, sacrificial self-giving and unvanquished love. We believe that we have been reconciled to God through the cross.

26. In the resurrection we believe “Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death and giving life to those in the tomb” (BCP, p. 483). By our baptism into Christ’s death and resurrection we enjoy new life as members of the Body of Christ, called therefore to become ourselves ambassadors of reconciliation (Romans 6:4; 2 Corinthians 5:14-20).

27. Professing salvation in Christ is not a matter of competing with other religious traditions with the imperative of converting one another. Each tradition brings its own understanding of the goal of human life to the interreligious conversation. Christians bring their particular profession of confidence in God's intentions as they are seen in and through the incarnation, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. As the bishops at Lambeth 2008 noted, "The purpose of dialogue is not compromise, but growth in trust and understanding of each other's faith and traditions. Effective and meaningful dialogue will only take place where there is gentleness, honesty and integrity. In all of this, we affirm that Christianity needs to be lived and presented as 'a way of life,' rather than a static set of beliefs (§ 89)."

28. Claiming Jesus as the Way, therefore, requires us to "respect the dignity of every human being" (BCP, p. 305). This grounds our expectation that we shall discover new insights and develop new relationships through interreligious dialogue. In mutual encounters and shared ascetic, devotional, ethical and prophetic witness, we dare to hope that God will reveal new and enriching glimpses of a reconciled humanity.

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- VI. Mission and Evangelism

29. Another sensitive and important aspect of interreligious relations concerns how we as Christians are called to offer life abundant (John 10:10) and to "make disciples of all nations" (Matthew 28:16-20). Christianity (including Anglicanism) is an actively evangelical religion. As we consider mission and evangelism in a pluralistic, globalized world, we are mindful of our particular cultural contexts. We are aware that The Episcopal Church is an international church, with congregations in over sixteen different nations. We are also part of the larger Anglican Communion. We should always be mindful of how encounters with people of other religions in the United States may have differences as well as similarities with encounters in different contexts outside the U.S. We seek to be informed by the experience and reflection of our sisters and brothers living among men and women of many religious traditions in many nations. We stand in solidarity with each other, each seeking in our own circumstances to be faithful to the Gospel.

30. We have spoken in this statement of the need to love one's neighbor. We see that love taking a variety of forms. Commitment to justice and mutual respect is the paramount consideration for some, for whom the practice of Christian love is the most powerful witness to the truth of the Gospel. Others, while not denying the witness of faithful lives, believe that love demands the verbal proclamation of the Gospel and an open invitation to all people to be reconciled to God in Christ. Still others understand evangelization as our participation in God's transformation of human society. The love of God that Jesus expressed in presence, compassion, healing and justice: this we are called to live in mission. The reconciliation that God offers a sinful and broken world in Jesus' death and resurrection: this is the hope we offer the world in mission. As we seek to respond to God's call to love our neighbor, we all must seek to avoid ways of interaction which do violence to the integrity of human persons and communities.

31. We look for a way forward in the theology of companionship, as articulated in *Companions in Transformation*. This statement, produced by the Standing Commission on World Mission, reflects important developments in The Episcopal Church's understanding of how we participate in global mission; it is currently in a process of reception and review by the Church. *Companions in Transformation* outlines different ways in which Episcopalians are

called to engage in mission and witness, and we believe these ways are also important in the service of interreligious dialogue. *Companions* states that a church participating in God's mission may not be able to solve the anguish, violence and injustice suffered by companion churches. Even so, simply being present in the place of fear, loss and isolation expresses the love of Christ. We seek to be in companionship with our interreligious partners as we present ourselves in a variety of ways:

- **Pilgrim:** Pilgrims grow in their knowledge of God, learning as much as they share, receiving as much as they give. The humility of this orientation and the eagerness to learn from companions nurtures deep and lasting relationships. The pilgrim motif opens the door to true mutuality, where, as the 1966 Anglican Congress said about partnership, "all are givers and all are receivers."
- **Servant:** Servanthood means that we listen to the stated needs of our companions and look for signs of God's work in them. It means that we seek to meet Christ in all situations. For Episcopalians, authentic servanthood is a crucial counter to the assumptions we develop on the basis of our extraordinary access to the power of information, technology and money. Servanthood is a key mark for our church as a whole, though it is sometimes perceived as a domineering church in a superpower nation.
- **Prophet:** In companionship we often find our views of political, racial and economic relationships in the world challenged and transformed. Episcopalians in the 21st century are called to prophesy both to our own church and to the world church that the Body of Christ may be a mustard seed of God's Jubilee in the world, working justice for the whole human family from all faiths.
- **Ambassador:** In addition to witnessing in word and deed as ambassadors of Christ, in companionship with interfaith partners we are ambassadors of our own church. As Episcopalians in dialogue, we must be aware always that companions are experiencing the vision, faithfulness and integrity of The Episcopal Church through our conversation, conduct and life. The role of ambassador also entails a commitment to represent fairly the life of The Episcopal Church. We should not be hesitant in being Episcopalian Christians, just as our interreligious partners are not hesitant in being faithful Muslims, Jews, Buddhists, Hindus, Jains, Sikhs, Bahai or other faiths, as we are in dialogue with each other.
- **Host:** "Let a little water be brought and wash your feet," said Abraham to the three strangers who appeared at Mamre (Genesis 18:4). "Let it be to me according to your word," said Mary to the angel Gabriel (Luke 1:38). God is not forcible but invites a response of hospitality. As we engage in interreligious dialogue, hospitality must be central in our response. Hospitality means that we listen to what our companions say, offer them opportunities to experience the breadth of our church and care for one another. We are likewise called to be generous and hospitable with those whom God brings to us, always respecting the practices and customs of our partners.
- **Sacrament:** As the body of Christ, the church is a sacrament of Christ, an outward and visible sign of Christ's inward and spiritual grace. We are called to be signs of God's mission to reconcile all people with one another and with God in Christ. The people and communities we meet are likewise sacramental signs of God's global presence. This sacramental emphasis helps us to retain an incarnational focus on people, relationships and community, where God truly lives and where the most lasting impacts are made.

32. We are called and committed to be in companionship and partnership in interreligious dialogue in these different ways. We believe that religions must stand together in solidarity with all who are suffering and witness to the dignity of every human being. In these ways, presence in mission becomes a courageous mode of peace-making in a violent world. With

ecumenical and interreligious groups, initiatives to encourage contact and dialogue and to advocate for religious freedom are imperative for reconciliation amid today's heightened tensions among religions. God is calling us to join hands with all, and to speak out when religious freedom is curtailed and when the social, environmental, economic or political welfare of communities is damaged. We believe that authentic Christian witness and evangelism that serve God's mission are compatible with authentic interreligious dialogue.

33. At the outset of this statement, we recalled that one hundred and twenty years ago in the Chicago Quadrilateral, The Episcopal Church formulated a definition of what it considered essential to engage in ecumenical relations. Today Christianity lives and serves in a global setting in which all of God's human creation is challenged to find common ground for our mutual flourishing. Interreligious relations are vital to this. In seeking to articulate for this century the principles to be considered for authentic interreligious relations and dialogue, we offer three gifts from The Episcopal Church and the Anglican way:

- Our comprehensive way of thinking by which we balance Scripture, reason and tradition in relationship building;
- Our belief system that centers on the incarnation of God in Christ, and on the Crucified One who leads us to self-emptying, forgiveness and reconciliation; and
- Our practice of focusing mission in terms of service, companionship and partnership between people as demonstrative of God's embrace of human life.

34. These gifts are especially suited for our time. The late Martin Luther King, Jr., celebrated in *Lesser Feasts and Fasts*, foresaw a time when as one all human beings of every religion would have to learn to choose "a non-violent coexistence" over a "violent co-annihilation," and to seek community over chaos. Interreligious relations are no longer about competing religions but about mutual demonstrations of Love Incarnate. We close this statement encouraged by Dr. King's word: "Love is the key that unlocks the door which leads to ultimate reality. This Hindu-Muslim-Christian-Jewish-Buddhist belief about human reality is beautifully summed up in the first Epistle of St. John: 'Let us love one another; for love is of God; and everyone that loves is born of God and knows God. The one who loves not does not know God, for God is love. If we love one another God dwells in us, and God's love is perfected in us.'"

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Anaheim, 2009* (New York: General Convention, 2009), pp. 681-690.



Resolution Number: 2009-D020
Title: Commend and Report on the Proposed Anglican Covenant
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Substituted
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 76th General Convention of The Episcopal Church commend the Anglican Covenant proposed in the most recent text of the Covenant Design Group (the “Ridley Cambridge Draft”) and any successive drafts to the dioceses for study and comment during the coming triennium; and be it further

Resolved, That dioceses report on their study to the Executive Council in keeping with Resolution 2006-A166; and be it further

Resolved, That Executive Council prepare a report to the 77th General Convention of The Episcopal Church that includes draft legislation concerning this Church’s response to an Anglican Covenant; and be it further

Resolved, That dioceses and congregations be invited to consider the Anglican Covenant proposed draft as a document to inform their understanding of and commitment to our common life in the Anglican Communion.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Anaheim, 2009* (New York: General Convention, 2009), pp. 337-338.



Resolution Number: 2009-D025
Title: Reaffirm Participation in the Anglican Communion and Acknowledge Differences
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 76th General Convention reaffirm the continued participation of The Episcopal Church as a constituent member of the Anglican Communion; give thanks for the work of the bishops at the Lambeth Conference of 2008; reaffirm the abiding commitment of The Episcopal Church to the fellowship of churches that constitute the Anglican Communion and seek to live into the highest degree of communion possible; and be it further
Resolved, That the 76th General Convention encourage dioceses, congregations and members of The Episcopal Church to participate to the fullest extent possible in the many instruments, networks and relationships of the Anglican Communion; and be it further
Resolved, That the 76th General Convention reaffirm its financial commitment to the Anglican Communion and pledge to participate fully in the Inter-Anglican Budget; and be it further
Resolved, That the 76th General Convention affirm the value of “listening to the experience of homosexual persons,” as called for by the Lambeth Conferences of 1978, 1988 and 1998, and acknowledge that through our own listening the General Convention has come to recognize that the baptized membership of The Episcopal Church includes same-sex couples living in lifelong committed relationships “characterized by fidelity, monogamy, mutual affection and respect, careful, honest communication and the holy love which enables those in such relationships to see in each other the image of God” (2000-D039); and be it further
Resolved, That the 76th General Convention recognize that gay and lesbian persons who are part of such relationships have responded to God’s call and have exercised various ministries in and on behalf of God’s One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church and are currently doing so in our midst; and be it further
Resolved, That the 76th General Convention affirm that God has called and may call such individuals to any ordained ministry in The Episcopal Church, and that God’s call to the ordained ministry in The Episcopal Church is a mystery which the Church attempts to discern for all people through our discernment processes acting in accordance with the Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church; and be it further
Resolved, That the 76th General Convention acknowledge that members of The Episcopal Church as of the Anglican Communion, based on careful study of the Holy Scriptures, and in light of tradition and reason, are not of one mind, and Christians of good conscience disagree about some of these matters.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Anaheim, 2009* (New York: General Convention, 2009), pp. 627-628.



Resolution Number: 2006-A159
Title: Affirm Commitment to the Anglican Communion
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Substituted
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 75th General Convention of The Episcopal Church reaffirm the abiding commitment of The Episcopal Church to the fellowship of churches that constitute the Anglican Communion and seek to live into the highest degree of communion possible; and be it further

Resolved, That the 75th General Convention reaffirm that The Episcopal Church is in communion with the See of Canterbury, upholding and propagating the historic Faith and Order as set forth in the Book of Common Prayer; and be it further

Resolved, That the 75th General Convention join with the Archbishop of Canterbury, the primates, and the Anglican Consultative Council in making a commitment to the vision of interdependent life in Christ, characterized by forbearance, trust, and respect, and commend the Windsor Report and process as a means of deepening our understanding of that commitment; and be it further

Resolved, That as an expression of interdependence, the Presiding offices of both Houses work in partnership with the churches of the Anglican Communion to explore ways by which there might be inter-Anglican consultation and participation on Standing Commissions of the General Convention of The Episcopal Church.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Columbus, 2006* (New York: General Convention, 2007), p. 338.



Resolution Number: 2006-A166
Title: Support Development of an Anglican Covenant
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 75th General Convention of The Episcopal Church, as a demonstration of our commitment to mutual responsibility and interdependence in the Anglican Communion, support the process of the development of an Anglican Covenant that underscores our unity in faith, order, and common life in the service of God's mission; and be it further

Resolved, That the 75th General Convention direct the International Concerns Standing Committee of the Executive Council and The Episcopal Church's members of the Anglican Consultative Council to follow the development processes of an Anglican Covenant in the Communion, and report regularly to the Executive Council as well as to the 76th General Convention; and be it further

Resolved, That the 75th General Convention report these actions supporting the Anglican Covenant development process, noting such missiological and theological resources as the Standing Commission on World Mission and the House of Bishops' Theology Committee to the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Joint Standing Committee of the Anglican Consultative Council and the Primates, and the Secretary General of the Anglican Communion; and that the Presiding Bishop of The Episcopal Church report the same to the Primates of the Churches of the Anglican Communion.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Columbus, 2006* (New York: General Convention, 2007), pp. 339-340.



Resolution Number: 2003-A109
Title: Support Participation in the International Anglican Liturgical Consultation
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Substituted
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 74th General Convention reaffirm and support the Church's participation in and support of the International Anglican Liturgical Consultation; 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 \$25,000 for implementation of this resolution.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Minneapolis, 2003* (New York: General Convention, 2004), p. 678.



Resolution Number: 2000-A129
Title: Direct the Executive Council to Develop Relationships with Overseas Dioceses
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 2000 General Convention commend to Executive Council the efforts of the Consultation on Autonomy held in October 1999 by the Standing Commission on World Mission with autonomous jurisdictions that were formerly part of the Episcopal Church, namely, the Episcopal Anglican Church of Brazil, the Anglican Church of Central America, the Episcopal Diocese of Liberia (now a member of the Province of West Africa), the Anglican Church of Mexico, and the Episcopal Church in the Philippines; and be it further

Resolved, That this Convention direct Executive Council to honor the Church's continuing covenants and agreements with jurisdictions of the Anglican Communion that were formerly part of the Episcopal Church to ensure that all of the Episcopal Church's responsibilities under the covenants are carried out and that the Church work in companionship with them to carry out God's mission; and be it further

Resolved, That this Convention direct Executive Council to nurture companionship with the Church's present overseas jurisdictions - namely, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Haiti, Honduras, Litoral, Taiwan, the Virgin Islands, Convocation of American Churches in Europe, and the Church in Micronesia - to ensure growth toward maturity among all participants and including ECUSA; and be it further

Resolved, That this Convention direct Executive Council to set long-range financial goals for the portion of the program budget devoted to overseas ECUSA jurisdictions; develop and publicize a plan for meeting such goals; and determine the feasibility of a "campaign for autonomy" that would avoid the need for lengthy covenant commitments if and when autonomy is undertaken by any overseas jurisdictions; and be it further

Resolved, That this Convention direct Executive Council to include the Church's overseas jurisdictions in all communications planning and programming, especially electronic communications; and to prepare a plan in consultation with the Companion diocesan network to encourage companion relationships with geographically distant overseas jurisdictions and provinces; and be it further

Resolved, That this Convention direct Executive Council to ensure that all Executive Council members are briefed thoroughly at least once a year on the status of overseas ECUSA jurisdictions, autonomy processes being undertaken by ECUSA jurisdictions and covenants with autonomous jurisdictions formerly part of ECUSA; and be it further

Resolved, That this Convention direct Executive Council to ensure that overseas ECUSA dioceses are effectively represented on decision-making bodies of the Church and that the decision-making bodies of ECUSA continue to seek the perspectives of the jurisdictions formerly part of ECUSA.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Denver, 2000* (New York: General Convention, 2001), p. 533f.



Resolution Number: 2000-C006
Title: Address Urban Mission in the U.S. and in the Anglican Communion
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Substituted
Final Text:

Resolved, That the Executive Council, recognizing the Episcopal Church's historic commitment to urban mission and in keeping with the 1998 Lambeth conference Resolution II.7, "give urgent attention to the Lambeth Section Two report on 'Living and Proclaiming the Good News' in our cities so that all that destroys our full humanity is being challenged, the socially excluded are being welcomed, and the poor are hearing the Good News (Matthew 11:5);" and be it further

Resolved, That the 73rd General Convention call upon the Executive Council "to address the processes of urbanization around the world both in our cities and all other communities," (Lambeth II.7) in cooperation with existing urban mission networks in the Episcopal Church, the United States, and the wider ecumenical community; and be it further

Resolved, That the Representatives of the Episcopal Church in the United States of America to the Anglican Consultative Council:

- a) support the development of an Anglican Urban Network to share information and experience on urbanization and urban mission across the Anglican Communion and other ecumenical bodies,
- b) work with the proposed Urban Network to prepare a report for the next meeting of the Anglican Consultative Council regarding the scope and viability of a "Faith in an Urban World" Commission for the Anglican Communion, and
- c) include urban mission on the agenda for the planned Anglican Congress; and be it further

Resolved, That the Executive Council and the Episcopal Church in the United States of America representatives to the Anglican Consultative Council report back to the 74th General Convention on these initiatives.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Denver, 2000* (New York: General Convention, 2001), p. 492f.



Resolution Number: 2000-C009
Title: Celebrate the Anglican Communion and Affirm Understanding of Authority
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Substituted
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 73rd General Convention of the Episcopal Church celebrate the diversity of cultures and races of the member churches of the Anglican Communion; and be it further
Resolved, That the Convention note that the breadth of cultural differences in the Communion today is both a gift and a challenge to understandings of authority in our communion; and be it further

Resolved, That the Convention affirm the Anglican experience of shared provincial authority as an authority shared among lay, clerical, and episcopal orders as well as among the many and diverse churches of the Anglican Communion; and be it further

Resolved, That the Convention commend the Episcopal Church's ongoing participation in the variety of ways Anglicans come together as the Body of Christ including, but not limited to, diocesan and national conventions, the Anglican Consultative Council, Lambeth Conferences, the Primates Meeting, Anglican Congresses, and official and unofficial networks; and be it further

Resolved, That the Convention encourage the continuing evolution of conciliar modes of discernment in the practice of an authority that relies upon scripture, tradition, and reason as the basis for our discernment of God's will in our lives.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Denver, 2000* (New York: General Convention, 2001), p. 257.