

General Convention of The Episcopal Church 2024 Archives' Research Report

Resolution No.: 2024-D010
Title: The Creation of a Clergy Compensation Contribution Fund
Proposer: Duncan, Canon Noreen
Topic: Clergy Benefits, Employee Benefits

Directly Related: (Attached)

None

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

2022-D003 On the Topic of Creating a Clergy Retirement Contribution Fund

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](#).

D010 - The Creation of a Clergy Compensation Contribution Fund

Final Status: Not Yet Finalized

Proposed by: Duncan, Canon Noreen

Endorsed by: Buchanan, Canon Annette, Shoemaker, The Rev. Dr. Adam

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: Yes

Directs Dioceses: No

Directs Executive Council: Yes

HiA: HD

Legislative Committee Currently Assigned: 12 - Agencies & Boards

Completion Status: Incomplete

Latest House Action: N/A

Supporting Documents: No

Resolution Text

Resolved, the House of _____ concurring,

That the 81th General Convention of The Episcopal Church direct the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the Protestant Episcopal Church (the "Episcopal Church") to conduct a study to determine if it is possible to establish a permanent Clergy Compensation Contribution Fund (the "Fund") whereby the applicable 9% matching contributions will be made from the Fund to pay the matching contributions of a priest's compensation who would serve such congregation but for the fact that the required matching contributions makes it unaffordable for the hiring of such priest; and be it further

Resolved, That such study shall include a review of all existing trust assets to determine if any such existing trust funds can be repurposed to finance the Fund; and be it further

Resolved, That no priest may be eligible to participate in receiving matching contributions from the Fund where his/her congregation's gross income exceeds \$250,000; and be it further

Resolved, That The Church Pension Fund also be included in the discussions because of its clergy compensation expertise; and be it further

Resolved, That the Officers of the Episcopal Church and Executive Council shall refer this resolution to the appropriate Interim Body for consideration; and be it further

Resolved, That The Episcopal Church shall report to the 82nd General Convention on the progress that it has made during the triennium in its efforts to effectuate the purposes of this resolution.

Explanation

With the documented decline of church memberships across The Episcopal Church, congregations are increasingly unable to afford their two highest expenses which are building maintenance and clergy compensation. Without full-time clergy, congregations are caught in the cycle of decline and are unable to reverse the negative vitality trend which may eventually lead to the church's closure.

Many of the congregations that are impacted by the unaffordability of a priest, because of the matching contributions, are predominately African American, urban and under-resourced, thereby rendering them unsustainable as membership declines as a result of the lack of a priest.

Such funding of the purposes of this resolution would live into The Episcopal Church's embrace of its commitment to the establishment of The Beloved Community and remove the barriers of historical inequities and injustice that surface today as a lack of financial resources including endowments for some congregations.

It is therefore necessary to determine how the Fund can be created to fund the 9% matching contributions of a priest's compensation who would serve such congregations but for the fact that the required matching contributions makes it unaffordable to prevent that congregation from the hiring of such priest.

It is important that this Fund be established at a church-wide level to reduce the burden on Diocese's that may be resource constrained and to enable greater access to all congregations across the church.