

## General Convention of The Episcopal Church 2024 Archives' Research Report

**Resolution No.:** 2024-D031  
**Title:** Addressing the Ongoing Harm of Coercive and Abusive Christian Ministries  
**Proposer:** Warren, Ms. Evangeline  
**Topic:** Racism, Reconciliation

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### Directly Related: (Attached)

2022-A017 Urge Assessment of Participation In Historic Colonialism  
2022-A052 Revise Mandate for Executive Council Committee on Anti-Racism and Reconciliation  
2022-A125 Establish the Episcopal Coalition for Racial Equity and Justice  
2022-A127 Create Commission to Research Church's Historic Role in Indigenous Boarding Schools  
2022-A129 Conduct Historical Research on DFMS Assets Tied to Racial Injustice  
2022-D074 Refer a Resolution on Examining TEC's Role in Facilitating Forced Adoptions (Referred)  
2022-D076 On the Topic of Addressing the Ongoing Harm of Crisis Pregnancy Centers (Rejected)  
2009-D035 Repudiate the Doctrine of Discovery  
1994-D105 Commend the Work of Pregnancy Care Centers

**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](#).*

# D031 - Addressing the Ongoing Harm of Coercive and Abusive Christian Ministries

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**Final Status:** Not Yet Finalized

**Proposed by:** Warren, Ms. Evangeline

**Endorsed by:** Curlin, Ms. Laura, Coulston, Mr Rob

**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:** No

**HiA:** No House Assigned

**Legislative Committee Currently Assigned:** No Committee Assigned

**Completion Status:** Incomplete

**Latest House Action:** N/A

**Supporting Documents:** No

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## Resolution Text

*Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring,

That the 81st General Convention, recognizing that our baptismal promise to “seek and serve Christ in all persons” goes hand in hand with our charge to “respect the dignity of every human being,” lament the historic and ongoing prevalence of coercion and abuse within Christian social ministries, with particular acknowledgement of how participation in religious services has been a prerequisite for the receipt of social support, how evangelizing publications have been packaged with material support, and how support has been denied to individuals whose relationships do not conform to Church-dictated structures; and be it further

*Resolved*, That the 81st General Convention repent for The Episcopal Church’s own past complicity in coercive and abusive ministries such as, but not limited to, Indigenous boarding schools, homes for unwed mothers, and crisis pregnancy centers (also known as pregnancy resource centers); and be it further

*Resolved*, That the 81st General Convention direct the Office of Government Relations to work to defeat funding initiatives and governmental support for these, and other, coercive and abusive Christian ministries.

## **Explanation**

Our Church, like many manifestations of Christian faith, has regretfully been complicit in coercive and abusive ministries, such as Indigenous boarding schools, homes for unwed mothers, and crisis pregnancy centers. While we have begun the work of reckoning with some of these harms, we need to recognize that there are distinct harms caused by the participation of the Church, as opposed to a secular entity. Rather than respecting the dignity of every human being, the moral authority of the Church has been used to coerce, abuse, and stigmatize people.

At the 80th General Convention, we resolved to acknowledge the intergenerational trauma caused by the “operation of Indigenous boarding schools, and other systems of white supremacy that have oppressed Indigenous peoples” and identified steps towards reconciliation (2022-A127). We also recognized the pain of forced adoptions and resolved to investigate the Church’s role further (2022-D074). However, the Church has not lamented its past support for crisis pregnancy centers (1994-D105) in the face of more recent evidence of harm, including that they provide incorrect information and pressure women to keep unplanned pregnancies. Nor has the General Convention directed OGR to speak about the harms of abusive Christian ministries and work against the normalization of these organizations. The use of charity as a coercive tool, restricting access to necessary care and support for those in need, violates the most fundamental tenets of our shared baptismal promises and Christian faith.

As a Church, we must commit to continuing the work of reconciliation *and* to holding ourselves accountable for that which has been done in our name.



**Resolution Number:** 2022-A017  
**Title:** Urge Assessment of Participation In Historic Colonialism  
**Legislative Action Taken:** Concurred as Amended  
**Final Text:**

*Resolved, That the 80th General Convention acknowledge and grieve the participation of the Episcopal Church and its various entities and institutions in colonialism in North America, Latin America, Africa, Oceania and Asia; and warns of and laments colonial mindsets in the Church today; and be it further*

*Resolved, That the General Convention affirm that Colonialism and its continuing impacts are antithetical to the Gospel as proclaimed by our Savior Jesus Christ, and that we are all called to repent and atone for the evils perpetuated in the name of Christ in the missionary field; and be it further*

*Resolved, That the Standing Commission on World Mission (SCWM) encourage the Episcopal Church to use principles and practices which turn from the colonial mindset of the past towards mutuality of relationships in our mission, ministries, and outreach; and be it further*

*Resolved, That the General Convention urge the SCWM to deliver a report to the 82nd General Convention on the historic role of the Episcopal Church in colonialism through its missionary work, and how and where a colonial mindset continues to prejudice our work in propagating the Gospel; and be it further*

*Resolved, \$50,000 be budgeted to support the Office of Global Partnerships in support of this work in partnership with the Standing Commission on World Mission in the next Biennium.*

**Citation:** General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Baltimore, 2022* (New York: General Convention, 2023), pp. 542-543.



**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-A125  
**Title:** Establish the Episcopal Coalition for Racial Equity and Justice  
**Legislative Action Taken:** Concurred as Substituted  
**Final Text:**

*Resolved, That the 80th General Convention of the Episcopal Church affirms that striving to become the Beloved Community of Jesus is central to our baptismal vocation in God's mission, and every Episcopalian is called to a lifelong vocation of racial justice and equity and the dismantling of white supremacy; and be it further*

*Resolved, That the 80th General Convention establish the Episcopal Coalition for Racial Equity and Justice as a voluntary association of Episcopal dioceses, parishes, organizations, and individuals dedicated to the work of becoming the Beloved Community; and be it further*

*Resolved, That the Episcopal Coalition for Racial Equity and Justice be charged with facilitating, coordinating, encouraging, supporting, and networking efforts of Episcopal dioceses, parishes, organizations, and individuals for racial justice and equity, and the dismantling of white supremacy, in collaboration with the work of the Executive Council and staff of the Episcopal Church Center; and be it further*

*Resolved, That the Presiding Bishop and President of the House of Deputies appoint a Constituting Group for the development, implementation, and creation of the Episcopal Coalition for Racial Equity and Justice, whose work includes determining and proposing all necessary organizational, canonical, legal, and other actions necessary to constitute formally and oversee said Coalition; and be it further*

*Resolved, That once the Coalition is constituted, it shall be funded with an annual draw on one-tenth of the trusts and endowment funds available for general use in the Episcopal Church's budget, the income of which is currently found on Line 5 of the Episcopal Church budget; and be it further*

*Resolved, That the draw percentage applied to fund the Coalition be the same percentage as that applied to fund the Episcopal Church's budget; and be it further*

*Resolved, That to support the development of the Episcopal Coalition for Racial Equality and Justice, the Constituting Group be funded during the biennial 2023-2024 at the level of \$200,000 a year.*

**Citation:** General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Baltimore, 2022* (New York: General Convention, 2023), pp. 768-769.



**Resolution Number:** 2022-A127  
**Title:** Create Commission to Research Church's Historic Role in Indigenous Boarding Schools  
**Legislative Action Taken:** Concurred as Substituted  
**Final Text:**

*Resolved, That we recognize the work of becoming Beloved Community as a long-term commitment directed toward dismantling racism, which is essential to our spiritual life, by acknowledging, engaging, and supporting the ongoing work of racial Healing, Justice, and Reconciliation as one Body of Christ. Thereby, we live into our Baptismal Covenant of “Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being? I will with God’s help,” and every Episcopalian strives toward the dismantling of white supremacy; and be it further*

*Resolved, That the 80th General Convention create a fact-finding commission to conduct research in the Archives of The Episcopal Church and its dioceses, the National Archives, and the Library of Congress, as well as any other repository of historical documents relevant to the role of the Episcopal Church in the Indigenous residential boarding schools of North America; and be it further*

*Resolved, That this 80th General Convention thanks the Executive Council for its commitment to work on “Native Boarding Schools and Advocacy, Resolution MW062 in VBinder), and urges it to work cooperatively with the conduct of a comprehensive and complete investigation of the church’s ownership and operation of Episcopal-run Indigenous boarding schools; and be it further*

*Resolved, That the Archives of The Episcopal Church be encouraged to hire one or more research fellows to work with dioceses where Episcopal-run boarding schools were located to find and share records from those schools; and be it further*

*Resolved, That the Archives be directed to share all relevant records with the Indigenous Ministries of The Episcopal Church and the National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition for inclusion in their growing resource database; and be it further*

*Resolved, That the Archives be directed to work with the Office of Indigenous Ministries to support the production of an educational video that can be used across the church to share the history of Indigenous boarding schools in the US and the history of The Episcopal Church-run boarding schools; and be it further*

*Resolved, That the dioceses of The Episcopal Church will be strongly encouraged to, before the 81st General Convention, begin an audit of the relationship, financial or otherwise, between the federal government, the diocese and/or its subsidiary entities, its churches, and any Episcopal or non-Episcopal missionary societies with respect to any Indigenous residential boarding school operated within the territorial jurisdiction of that diocese; and be it further*

*Resolved, That the dioceses of The Episcopal Church will be strongly encouraged to, before the 81st General Convention, begin to gather information from boarding school survivors and their descendants about the experiences of Indigenous children and families in Episcopal run and/or supported residential boarding schools within the territorial jurisdiction of that diocese; and be it further*

*Resolved, That the dioceses of The Episcopal Church will be strongly encouraged to, before the 81st General Convention, provide a public platform through which the stories of boarding*



school survivors of any Indigenous residential boarding schools within the territorial jurisdiction of that diocese and their descendants might be preserved and shared; and be it further

*Resolved*, That the 80th General Convention acknowledge the intergenerational trauma caused by the Doctrine of Discovery, colonialism, genocide, ethnocide through the operation of Indigenous boarding schools, and other systems of white supremacy that have oppressed Indigenous peoples; and be it further

*Resolved*, That this 80th General Convention direct Executive Council to follow the lead of Indigenous communities and invest in community-based spiritual healing centers that will work to address the effect of intergenerational trauma by providing mental health and substance abuse counseling, traditional forms of healing, family counseling, and other services and support desired by local communities; and be it further

*Resolved*, That The Episcopal Church will support federal legislation to create a truth and healing commission on Indian boarding school policy, consistent with the Federal Indian Boarding School Initiative of the U.S. Department of the Interior and its efforts to “shed light on the traumas of the past;” and be it further

*Resolved*, That the 80th General Convention recognize, affirm, and support the ongoing work of Executive Council around these issues through the creation of the Executive Council Committee for Indigenous Boarding Schools and Advocacy, as well as the extraordinary efforts of the Presiding Officer’s Working Group on Truth-telling, Reckoning, and Healing; and be it further

*Resolved*, That the 80th General Convention appropriate \$2,500,000 over the next biennium, or some other degree of funding commensurate with The Episcopal Church’s commitment to the work of truth-telling and reconciliation around its role in Indigenous residential boarding schools, to adequately fund the provisions of this resolution, specifically 1) to fund the creation and support of a fact-finding commission; 2) to fund the work of the Office of Indigenous Ministries to create an education resource regarding the church’s role in Indigenous residential boarding schools; 3) to fund a grant program to support the work of the dioceses of The Episcopal Church in both conducting their own research into the diocesan role in Indigenous residential boarding schools and preserving the stories of boarding school survivors and their families; and 4) to support the establishment of community-based spiritual healing centers in Indigenous communities across The Episcopal Church to address the intergenerational trauma rooted in the church’s role in Indigenous residential boarding schools.

**Citation:** General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Baltimore, 2022* (New York: General Convention, 2023), pp. 769-770.



**Resolution Number:** 2022-A129  
**Title:** Conduct Historical Research on DFMS Assets Tied to Racial Injustice  
**Legislative Action Taken:** Concurred as Amended  
**Final Text:**

*Resolved, That the 80th General Convention directs the Presiding Bishop and the President of the House of Deputies to ensure that this Church conducts historical research on the origins and sources of the financial and all other assets of the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society that are directly tied to the enslavement of humans, the slave trade, and historical and current racial injustices, in order to tell the story of our history and to report the results to the Executive Council prior to the 81st General Convention; and be it further*  
*Resolved, That this 80th General Convention urges the Church Pension Group to conduct historical research on the origins and sources of its financial and all other assets, and to report the results to its constituents; and be it further*  
*Resolved, That this 80th General Convention urges each diocese to conduct its own historical research on the origins and sources of their financial and all other assets; and be it further*  
*Resolved, That this 80th General Convention allocates \$150,000 for this work.*

**Citation:** General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Baltimore, 2022* (New York: General Convention, 2023), p. 759.



**Resolution Number:** 2022-D074  
**Title:** Refer a Resolution on Examining TEC's Role in Facilitating Forced Adoptions  
**Legislative Action Taken:** Referred  
**Final Text:**

*Resolved, That the 80th General Convention of The Episcopal Church acknowledges the forced adoption era, which is defined as the time between the end of World War II through 1972 when single pregnant women were sequestered in maternity homes, many of which coerced them to surrender their children for adoption; run by The Episcopal Church; and be it further*

*Resolved, That the 80th General Convention of The Episcopal Church acknowledges the emotional and psychological pain caused by these forced adoptions, and the emotional, psychological, and sometimes, physical abuse inflicted on these mothers and their children, most of whom were forcefully isolated from family, friends and society; and be it further*

*Resolved, That the 80th General Convention of the Episcopal Church requests the Executive Council of the Episcopal Church appoint a working group to study the historical and current relationship of The Episcopal Church to the forced relinquishment and adoption of infants born to unwed mothers during the years between approximately 1945 to 1975, in order to achieve greater clarity on their respective role, responsibility and authority; and be it further*

*Resolved, That this working group investigates The Episcopal Church's complicity, including its charitable arms' and their roles in facilitating the forced relinquishment of infants born to unwed mothers during the aforementioned years; and that this working group be composed of bishop, clergy (priests and deacons) and lay members. The overall composition of this working group shall include women, members of LGBT community, people of color with geographical diversity and at least 5 members who are mothers of adoption loss, adult adoptees of all gender; and be it further*

*Resolved, That this working group works in consultation with individuals and organizations of mothers who lost infants to forced adoptions, and that the information gathering be used as the foundation for truth telling, confession, apology, repentance and reconciliation to facilitate inter-generational healing for mothers and families separated by forced adoption; and be it further*

*Resolved, That this working group of the Executive Council of the Episcopal Church submits its findings and recommendations to the 81st General Convention; and be it further*

*Resolved, That the 80th General Convention of The Episcopal Church support public policies that calls for legislatures to investigate incidents of forced adoption and to enact policies that respect the rights and dignity of mothers of adoption loss and adoptees; and be it further*

*Resolved, That the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget and Finance to allocate a budget of \$40,000 for the implementation of this resolution and to dedicate staff resources which may include, but not limited to the staff position proposed in resolution A063 Creation of a Director of Women's Ministries.*

**Citation:** General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Baltimore, 2022* (New York: General Convention, 2023), pp. 875-876.



**Resolution Number:** 2022-D076  
**Title:** On the Topic of Addressing the Ongoing Harm of Crisis Pregnancy Centers  
**Legislative Action Taken:** Rejected  
**Text of Resolution:**

*Resolved*, the House of Bishops concurring,

That the 80th General Convention denounces the work of Crisis Pregnancy Centers, also known as Pregnancy Resource Centers; and be it further

*Resolved*, That the 80th General Convention apologizes for the Church's previous support of Crisis Pregnancy Centers as detailed in Resolution 1994-D105.



**Resolution Number:** 2009-D035  
**Title:** Repudiate the Doctrine of Discovery  
**Legislative Action Taken:** Concurred as Substituted  
**Final Text:**

*Resolved, That the 76th General Convention repudiates and renounces the Doctrine of Discovery as fundamentally opposed to the Gospel of Jesus Christ and our understanding of the inherent rights that individuals and peoples have received from God, and that this declaration be proclaimed among our churches and shared with the United Nations and all the nations and peoples located within The Episcopal Church's boundaries. This doctrine, which originated with Henry VII in 1496, held that Christian sovereigns and their representative explorers could assert dominion and title over non-Christian lands with the full blessing and sanction of the Church. It continues to be invoked, in only slightly modified form, in court cases and in the many destructive policies of governments and other institutions of the modern nation-state that lead to the colonizing dispossession of the lands of indigenous peoples and the disruption of their way of life; and be it further*

*Resolved, That The Episcopal Church review its policies and programs with a view to exposing the historical reality and impact of the Doctrine of Discovery and eliminating its presence in its contemporary policies, program and structures and, further, that this body directs the appropriate representatives of the House of Bishops and House of Deputies, to inform all relevant governmental bodies in the United States of its action and suggest similar and equivalent review of historical and contemporary policies that contribute to the continuing colonization of Indigenous Peoples and, further, to write to Queen Elizabeth II, the Supreme Governor of the Church of England, requesting that her Majesty disavow, and repudiate publicly, the claimed validity of the Christian Doctrine of Discovery; and be it further*

*Resolved, That each diocese within The Episcopal Church be encouraged to reflect upon its own history, in light of these actions and encourage all Episcopalians to seek a greater understanding of the Indigenous Peoples within the geo-political boundaries claimed by the United States and other nation states located within The Episcopal Church's boundaries, and to support those peoples in their ongoing efforts for their inherent sovereignty and fundamental human rights as peoples to be respected; and be it further*

*Resolved, That the 76th General Convention direct the Office of Government Relations to advocate for the U.S. government's endorsement of the "United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples," which the United States has refused to endorse (only the U.S., Canada, New Zealand and Australia have failed to sign on).*

**Citation:** General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Anaheim, 2009* (New York: General Convention, 2009), pp. 371-372.



**Resolution Number:** 1994-D105  
**Title:** Commend the Work of Pregnancy Care Centers  
**Legislative Action Taken:** Concurred As Amended  
**Final Text:**

*Resolved, That the 71st General Convention commend the members of this church who minister through pregnancy care centers, thereby helping to accomplish the will of General Convention to "assist those faced with problem pregnancy" (1988 General Convention Resolution on Abortion); and be it further*

*Resolved, That this General Convention commends the work and mission of pregnancy care centers which stress unconditional love and acceptance, for women and their unborn children; and be it further*

*Resolved, That we encourage the work of local pregnancy care centers to develop an outreach of love to pregnant women and to mothers and their children.*

**Citation:** General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Indianapolis, 1994* (New York: General Convention, 1995), p. 325.