

**GENERAL CONVENTION OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH 2018
ARCHIVES' RESEARCH REPORT**

RESOLUTION NO.: 2018-A022
TITLE: Create a Formation Networking Team
PROPOSER: Task Force on Clergy Leadership in Small Congregations
TOPIC: Ministry

Directly Related: (Attached)

2015-A045 Authorize a Task Force on Ministry Formation in Small Congregations
2012-D066 Establish Episcopal Network of Volunteer Executives and Professionals
2003-A059 Acknowledge Strategies and Skills for Church Leadership
2003-A121 Develop a Continuing Education Plan for Clergy and Lay Professionals
1997-D034 Request Dioceses to Establish Minimum Continuing Education Standards

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

2015-A061 Endorse the Leadership Program for Musicians Serving Small Congregations
2015-A075 Develop Web Access to Christian Formation Resources
2012-D037 Fund Lifelong Christian Formation and Vocation
1982-D097 Request the Seminaries to Train for Small Church Ministries

Supplemental Documents: (Linked)

(*Blue Book*) Report to General Convention, [Task Force on Clergy Leadership Formation in Small Congregations](#), see pages 652-654.

In preparing this report, the Archives researched the resolutions in the Acts of Convention database for the period 1976 through 2015, 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 at 800-525-9329 before Convention or at Convention in the General Convention Secretariat.

A022 Create a Formation Networking Team

Proposer	Task Force on Clergy Leadership in Small Congregations
Topic	Ministry
Endorsed by	
Sponsored by	
Page numbers	Blue Book: p. N/A; Constitution & Canons: p. N/A
HiA / Leg. Cttee	/
Current Status	Resolution Filed
Version	Original (as filed)
Review Status	Not yet reviewed

RESOLUTION TEXT

- Resolved*, the House of _____ concurring, That the 79th General Convention direct that a Formation Networking Team be established under the Office of the Presiding Bishop to serve as a networking referral hub for existing and specially-developed resources (online and otherwise) for the discernment of clergy and lay vocations, for clergy and lay formation, and for training clergy and lay leaders in matters such as evangelism, spiritual practices, discipleship, collaborative leadership, characteristics of small communities, relational and networking skills, raising up and empowering lay leadership, relating the Gospel to life, racial reconciliation, teaching and mentoring, and inspiring communities of faith; and be it further
- Resolved*, That the 79th General Convention request the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget and Finance to consider a budget allocation of \$900,000 for the implementation of this resolution.

EXPLANATION

The findings of the Task Force consistently indicate that many dioceses, commissions on ministry, discernment committees and congregations find it difficult to identify and access suitable resources for training and guiding those responsible for vocational discernment and to identify and access effective resources for the formation and training of new clergy and lay leaders for small congregations.

To address these needs, the Task Force recommends that a Formation Networking Team be formed under the Office of the Presiding Bishop. The Formation Networking Team would be available by telephone and e-mail to individuals, Christian educators, clergy, commissions on ministry, discernment committees and congregations and dioceses that seek assistance in these areas. In due course, the Task Force expects that the Formation Networking Team would create a well-focused website of curated resources that allows users to evaluate the suitability of materials for their particular needs and contexts. In addition to making existing resources more readily available, the Formation Networking Team would help further collaboration by seeking to connect interested parties in the creation of new resources as necessary and helpful.

Questions regarding formation for ordination arise in a rapidly-changing landscape of programs and

demands. The Formation Networking Team will enable timely responses to the pressing, time-sensitive needs of dioceses and congregations. A knowledgeable Team with a broad perspective of offerings across the Church will increase access to formation opportunities, especially for small congregations and dioceses.

Four (4) of the other resolutions proposed by the Task Force amplify the work that would be done by the Formation Networking Team.

The persons serving as the Formation Networking Team will need to be theologically trained so that they can properly evaluate resources which already exist in many forms and in many places. All members of the Formation Networking Team will need to be approachable and good listeners so they can direct persons to suitable resources. They will need to become familiar with the many resources currently available, and will need strong networking skills to promote sharing across the Church.

Having a Formation Networking Team will “level the playing field” so that congregations and dioceses with fewer financial and time resources can gain greater and faster access to what they need.

The members of the Formation Networking Team will need a small voluntary support committee to assist in evaluating and categorizing resources and making the Team aware of developing needs across the Church.



Resolution Number: 2015-A045
Title: Authorize a Task Force on Ministry Formation in Small Congregations
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 78th General Convention authorize a task force with membership appointed by the Presiding Officers consisting of no fewer than 10 nor more than 20 representatives including, but not limited to, representatives from local diocesan programs, representatives from seminaries, ecumenical representation, or representatives who are engaged in advanced theological education; and that the task force be made up of bishops, priests, deacons, and laity to explore quality programs for formation, for expanding education opportunities for clergy and laity, for collaboration between local diocesan school programs and seminaries, for ecumenical collaboration, and to explore a wide range of delivery methods. The task force shall report back to the 79th General Convention with a plan to provide quality formation for clergy in small congregations that is affordable, theologically reflective, and innovative; 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 \$150,000 for the implementation of this resolution.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Salt Lake City, 2015* (New York: General Convention, 2015), p. 416.



Resolution Number: 2012-D066
Title: Establish Episcopal Network of Volunteer Executives and Professionals
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred
Final Text:

Resolved, That The Episcopal Church establish the Episcopal Network of Volunteer Executives and Professionals (the “Network”) to provide management and administrative counsel, support and training to clergy, vestry members, administrators and other persons in congregations, dioceses and provinces; and be it further

Resolved, That the Chief Operating Officer of The Episcopal Church appoint an unpaid Coordinator of the Network to solicit volunteers for the Network, provide materials and best practices to volunteers, match volunteers with persons and organizations requesting assistance and training from the Network, and publicize the availability of the Network to congregations, dioceses and provinces; 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 \$15,000 for the implementation of this resolution to provide for a website for the Network and incidental travel expenses of the Coordinator.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Indianapolis, 2012* (New York: General Convention, 2012), pp. 315-316.



Resolution Number: 2003-A059
Title: Acknowledge Strategies and Skills for Church Leadership
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Substituted
Final Text:

Resolved, That in support of this church's 20/20 program for evangelism, and in recognition of the joys and challenges of 21st century ministry, and in acknowledgment that this ministry requires specific strategies and skills in:

- **intercultural leadership**
- **contemporary foreign language courses**
- **anti-racism education**
- **church planting**
- **congregational revitalization**
- **evangelism**
- **management of change**
- **negotiation of conflict;** and be it further

Resolved, That the 74th General Convention strongly urge that dioceses carry out recruitment, discernment, and evaluation of persons for lay and ordained ministries which consider these strategies and skills as integral aspects of church leadership. That the seminaries and diocesan schools for ministry of The Episcopal Church be urged to review and renew curricula, providing inclusion of these strategies and skills; and that opportunities across the church for continuing education, focus on these strategies and skills, most especially in the coming triennium, in order to lay a strong foundation for 20/20 evangelism.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Minneapolis, 2003* (New York: General Convention, 2004), p. 676.



Resolution Number: 2003-A121
Title: Develop a Continuing Education Plan for Clergy and Lay Professionals
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 74th General Convention encourage each diocese to develop a plan and make provisions for the continuing education of all clergy and lay professionals in its jurisdiction, such plan and its progress to be reported annually to the Standing Commission on Ministry Development; and be it further

Resolved, That dioceses that do not have continuing education policies or programs be urged to participate in a pilot program for the development of a diocesan continuing education policy and program sponsored by the Office for Ministry Development; 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 \$46,000 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. 489.



Resolution Number: 1997-D034
Title: Request Dioceses to Establish Minimum Continuing Education Standards
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred As Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That each diocese, through the cooperative efforts of the Bishop and the Commission on Ministry or other designated body, shall be responsible for:

Establishing minimum standards for continuing education, including what constitutes an acceptable program and the number of days or hours required per year;

Providing the ways and/or means, in collaboration with the leadership in the diocese, parish, and/or other institution, for continuing education to be made available to all clergy and lay professionals;

Developing standards and methods of accountability for assurance of compliance with their plan.

The plan devised by each diocese shall be submitted to the Board for Theological Education and the Board shall present reports on continuing education provisions in the diocese to each General Convention.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Philadelphia, 1997* (New York: General Convention, 1998), p. 272.