

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

RESOLUTION NO.: 2018-A026
TITLE: Identify Effective Formation Models
PROPOSER: Task Force on Clergy Leadership in Small Congregations
TOPIC: Theological Education

Directly Related: (Attached)

2015-A045 Authorize a Task Force on Ministry Formation in Small Congregations
2009-A119 Amend Canon I.1.2(n) [Standing Commission Mandates]

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

2009-A113 Charge the Standing Commission on Small Congregations
1991-D196 Recognize the Needs of Mission and Ministry in Small Communities
1985-A136 Develop a Position Description for the Staff Officer for Small Churches
1982-A107 Urge More Church Contacts Among Small Congregations
1982-A108 Urge Seminaries to Provide Resource Persons on Small Churches
1982-D097 Request the Seminaries to Train for Small Church Ministries
1979-A080 Establish a Committee and Program to Benefit the Church in Small Communities
1979-D047 Commend Resource Center for Small Churches

Supplemental Documents: (Linked)

(Blue Book) Report to General Convention, [Task Force on Clergy Leadership Formation in Small Congregations](#), see pages 656-657.

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.

A026 Identify Effective Formation Models

Proposer	Task Force on Clergy Leadership in Small Congregations
Topic	Theological Education
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

- 1 *Resolved*, the House of _____ concurring, That, if a Formation Networking Team is created, the General Convention direct the Team to assemble and make available to dioceses a variety of effective models, both local and collaborative, for the formation of priests and deacons to serve in small congregations; and be it further
- 2 *Resolved*, That, if a Formation Networking Team is not created, the 79th General Convention direct that an appropriate body or office in The Episcopal Church assemble and make available to dioceses a variety of effective models, both local and collaborative, for the formation of priests and deacons to serve in small congregations; and be it further
- 3 *Resolved*, That, if a Formation Networking Team is not created or is not funded, the 79th General Convention request the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget and Finance to consider a budget allocation of \$30,000 for the implementation of this resolution.

EXPLANATION

The current landscape for clergy formation is complex. Many dioceses have developed local formation programs and schools. There are several non-accredited programs used by a variety of dioceses. Some seminaries have made significant changes in recent years in the way they deliver theological education in non-conventional ways (through low-residence programs and through collaboration with local formation programs). All these developments have strong potential to serve the needs of those preparing for ministry in small congregations.

Survey data indicates that bishops and commissions on ministry seek a variety of models for effective formation strategies. There is interest in how collaboration among seminaries and diocesan schools can be done effectively, since low-residency programs at seminaries are best used in close collaboration with diocesan programs. Dioceses increasingly seek flexible and adaptable approaches that meet the formational needs of a variety of aspirants. “Cross-order formation” for priests, deacons and laypersons, in which all orders study together at least part of the time, is increasingly seen as both possible and desirable.



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: 2009-A119
Title: Amend Canon I.1.2(n) [Standing Commission Mandates]
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That Canon I.1.2(n) be amended to read as follows:

(n) There shall be the following Standing Commissions:

(2) A Standing Commission for Small Congregations. *It shall be the duty of the Commission to identify and recommend to General Convention policies, priorities and opportunities to affirm and strengthen the health and development of small congregations.*

(4) A Standing Commission on the Mission and Evangelism of The Episcopal Church. *It shall be the duty of the Commission to identify, study and consider policies, priorities and concerns as to the effectiveness of The Episcopal Church in advancing, within this Church's jurisdictions, God's mission to restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ, including patterns and directions for evangelism, Church planting, leadership development and ministries that engage the diversity of the Church's membership and the communities it serves, and to make recommendations to General Convention.*

(7) A Standing Commission on Ministry Development. *It shall be the duty of the Commission to:*

(i) *recommend policies and strategies to the General Convention for the affirmation, development and exercise of ministry by all baptized persons (lay persons, bishops, priests and deacons).*

(ii) *recommend strategies to General Convention for the development and support of networks of individuals, diocesan Committees and commissions, agencies and institutions engaged in recruitment, gifts discernment, education and training for ministry, leadership development and deployment.*

(iii) *study the needs and trends of theological education for all baptized persons, including seminary education and life-long learning, and recommend strategies to General Convention to strengthen theological education for all baptized persons.*

(8) A Standing Commission on Social Justice and Public Policy. *It shall be the duty of the Commission to identify, study and theologically interpret social justice issues facing the United States and their impact on other nations, and to develop and recommend policies and strategies to the General Convention.*

(9) A Standing Commission on Stewardship and Development. *It shall be the duty of the Commission to recommend policies that foster within The Episcopal Church a broad understanding of Christian stewardship, both individual and corporate. The Commission shall recommend strategies to General Convention for stewardship, including education, development and planned giving, with special sensitivity to the cultural and linguistic diversity of the Church.*

(10) A Standing Commission on the Structure of the Church. *It shall be the duty of the Commission to study and make recommendations concerning the structure of the General Convention and of The Episcopal Church. It shall, from time to time, review the operation of the several Committees, Commissions, and Boards to determine the necessity for their continuance and the effectiveness of their functions and to bring about a coordination of their efforts. Whenever a proposal is made for the creation of*

a new Committee, Commission, *Board or Agency*, it shall, wherever feasible, be referred to the Standing Commission on the Structure of the Church for its consideration and advice.

(11) A Standing Commission on World Mission, whose members shall include persons broadly representative of jurisdictions outside the United States of America, as well as persons having direct engagement with and experience in world mission. It shall be the duty of the Commission *to review and evaluate policies, priorities and strategies for global mission, and to make recommendations regarding global mission to General Convention.*

(12) A Standing Commission on Communication and Information Technology. It shall be the duty of the Commission to identify, study and *recommend to General Convention communication strategies, policies, priorities and technologies to strengthen the Church's communication of the Gospel and the mission of the Church to the world at large and to improve information management and exchange within The Episcopal Church.*

(13) A Standing Commission on Health. It shall be the duty of the Commission to *identify and study national and international healthcare issues, practices and policies and the Church's healthcare ministries, and to make recommendations to General Convention.*

(14) A Standing Commission on Lifelong Christian Formation and Education. It shall be the duty of the Commission to develop and recommend to the General Convention comprehensive and coordinated policies for children, youth, adults and seniors for lifelong Christian formation.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Anaheim, 2009* (New York: General Convention, 2009), pp. 275-277.