

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

**RESOLUTION NO.:** 2018-A080  
**TITLE:** A Season of Provincial Discernment  
**PROPOSER:** Task Force to Study Provinces  
**TOPIC:** Provinces

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**Directly Related:** (Attached)

2015-C027 Amend Canon I.9 [Of Provinces]  
2015-D011 Study the Effects of Eliminating Provinces  
2012-C071 On the Topic of Amending the Canon on Provinces (Rejected)  
2006-A052 Endorse the Position of Provincial Communication Specialist  
2000-B005 Reaffirm System of Geographic Provinces

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

2003-A146 Appropriate Funds for the Continuation of Provincial Coordinators  
2000-B011 Appropriate Funds for Provincial Program Coordinators

**Supplemental Documents:** (Linked)

(*Blue Book*) Report to General Convention, [Task Force to Study Provinces](#), see pages 943-944.

*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.*

# A080 A Season of Provincial Discernment

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<b>Proposer</b>	Task Force to Study Provinces
<b>Topic</b>	Provinces
<b>Endorsed by</b>	
<b>Sponsored by</b>	
<b>Page numbers</b>	Blue Book: p. N/A; Constitution & Canons: p. N/A
<b>HiA / Leg. Cttee</b>	/
<b>Current Status</b>	Resolution Filed
<b>Version</b>	Original (as filed)
<b>Review Status</b>	Not yet reviewed

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## RESOLUTION TEXT

- 1 *Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, That during the 2018-2021 triennium, The Episcopal Church commit to a season of discernment focused on identifying and strengthening the work of the provinces in the whole system of The Episcopal Church; including but not limited to: visioning for the kinds of collective aspirations for dioceses within a province as well as between provinces and articulating how these aspirations and efforts support the mission of The Episcopal Church and the wider Church; building the capacity for resource sharing between dioceses within a province as well as across the provinces; articulating the funding issues associated with the collaborative communications and networking and finding ways to support these funding issues (including the use of compensated staff); and be it further;
- 2 *Resolved*, That this work be initiated by the provinces, but expanded to include the dioceses and the larger Episcopal Church offices in the work and deliberations; and be it further;
- 3 *Resolved*, That the information articulated and developed be collected by the Provincial Leadership Conference and presented with recommendations for any system changes to the 80th General Convention.

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## EXPLANATION

From the research of the Task Force on Provinces, it has become clearer that possibilities for collaboration and communication through the provincial system are being missed. There is a need to make sure all parts of a large, complex system are functioning to their potential in order for the entire system to function optimally. The provincial system is only one part of the larger system of The Episcopal Church and finding the ways to strengthen one part of the system will impact the rest of the system. It is difficult to determine the effects prior to actual changes. It will be necessary to collate all the changes and then to identify how the larger system is affected. The Provincial Leadership Conference is constituted to be able to do this work. Hopefully by committing to an intentional effort of strengthening the provinces for the triennium, opportunities for the entire system will emerge.



**Resolution Number:** 2015-C027  
**Title:** Amend Canon I.9 [Of Provinces]  
**Legislative Action Taken:** Concurred as Amended  
**Final Text:**

*Resolved, That Canon I.9 be amended to insert a new Section 2, to read as follows:*

*Sec 2. The primary purposes of the Provinces are to facilitate interdiocesan collaboration to achieve Diocesan and Episcopal Church goals, and to enable more effective communications and regional advocacy of significant programmatic efforts.;* and be it further

*Resolved, That the final sentence of Canon I.9.7 be amended as follows:*

**Each Diocese and Area Mission shall determine the manner in which its Deputies shall be chosen~~selected~~.;** and be it further

*Resolved, That the Provincial Leadership Council, in consultation with the Standing Commission on Constitution and Canons and any other person or group the Provincial Leadership Council deem appropriate, review the Provinces in order to develop best practices and other recommendations for Provinces, including (a) facilitating mission opportunities, communications, networking and collaboration and (b) reviewing potential geographic, affiliation and/or composition changes to Provinces;* and be it further

*Resolved, That the Standing Commission on Constitution and Canons is directed to study whether there should be a revision to the Canons to provide for a single Court of Review for Priests and Deacons instead of Provincial Courts of Review (Canons IV.5.4 and IV.15), and report back to the 79th General Convention.*

**Citation:** General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Salt Lake City, 2015* (New York: General Convention, 2015), p. 449.



**Resolution Number:** 2015-D011  
**Title:** Study the Effects of Eliminating Provinces  
**Legislative Action Taken:** Concurred as Substituted  
**Final Text:**

*Resolved, That a Task Force consisting of three bishops, three clergy persons, and six lay persons representing the geographic diversity of the Church, including persons who have been involved in the creation of churchwide networks through social media and other electronic communications, be appointed by the presiding officers to study the potential effects of eliminating provincial structures in The Episcopal Church; and be it further*

*Resolved, That the Task Force study issues and potential effects of eliminating Provinces, including consideration of what structures might replace Provinces to facilitate or create networks to support mission and ministry; how such networks might be formed, function, funded, connected to other networks, and be constituted; how geographic diversity in elections, appointments, and other churchwide roles might be accomplished; and what effect the elimination of Provinces would have on overall costs; and be it further*

*Resolved, That the Task Force shall collaborate with the Standing Commission on Constitution and Canons in order to create recommendations to the 79th General Convention.*

**Citation:** General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Salt Lake City, 2015* (New York: General Convention, 2015), pp. 449-450.



**Resolution Number:** 2012-C071  
**Title:** On the Topic of Amending the Canon on Provinces  
**Legislative Action Taken:** Rejected [Died with Adjournment]  
**Text of Resolution:**

*Resolved*, the House of Bishops concurring, That Canon I.9.2 is hereby amended to read as follows:  
*Sec. 2. The primary purpose of the Provincial system is to provide a structure which facilitates dioceses' ability to collaborate together in ministry, whether it be in common projects or through the sharing of resources, assets and experience.*  
The current sections 2-11 will be renumbered accordingly.



**Resolution Number:** 2006-A052  
**Title:** Endorse the Position of Provincial Communication Specialist  
**Legislative Action Taken:** Concurred as Amended  
**Final Text:**

*Resolved, That the 75th General Convention of The Episcopal Church endorse a position of Provincial Communication Specialist for each of the nine provinces; and be it further*

*Resolved, That the Provincial Communication Specialist will assist in the implementation of the Communication Strategy of the Church and work directly with congregations and dioceses in the province to build connections for regional communication, to design websites, to develop story creation skills and to institute methods of distribution of news and information generated by each organization's mission work, educational offerings and evangelical outreach; and be it further*

*Resolved, That this resource person will assist attendees at workshops led by Church Center and Diocesan program staff in designing stories that will communicate their learning experience as fully as possible to Church members at the local level in order to maximize the effectiveness of such gatherings to the mission, education, and evangelism work of their individual congregations and dioceses, assist in networking information with Standing Commissions and Executive Council as needed and, when possible, offer training to local Church members, both youth and adult; and be it further*

*Resolved, That persons selected for these positions will be capable communication professionals and will work in coordination with The Episcopal Church Center Office of Communication to teach web design, coordinate dissemination of grass roots stories, both regionally and nationally and create "best practice" networks for continuation of that work throughout the Church; and be it further*

*Resolved, That the resources of the Church Center Office of Communication staff will be available to these persons, who will be based geographically within the Province served; and be it further*

*Resolved, That Provinces are encouraged to coordinate with The Episcopal Church's Office of Communication for the identification of such person, in consultation with the provincial leadership staff or a special Provincial Communications Committee created for this purpose; and be it further*

*Resolved, That the General Convention request that the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget and Finance to consider a budget allocation of up to \$9,000 for each year for a total of \$27,000 for the implementation of this resolution.*

**Citation:** General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Columbus, 2006* (New York: General Convention, 2007), pp. 160-161.



**Resolution Number:** 2000-B005  
**Title:** Reaffirm System of Geographic Provinces  
**Legislative Action Taken:** Concurred as Amended  
**Final Text:**

*Resolved, That the 73rd General Convention reaffirm the current system of organizing the dioceses of our church into geographical provinces for more effective mission and ministry, in recognition of the momentum, positive experiences, and energy within the provinces during this triennium; and be it further*

*Resolved, That the provinces utilize and broaden existing networks and resources to strengthen and expand their capacity to facilitate, coordinate, and support their mission and ministry initiatives; and be it further*

*Resolved, That provinces continue to fulfill their canonical responsibilities and those that may be assigned to them by General Convention or Executive Council; and be it further*

*Resolved, That provinces demonstrate accountability by reporting regularly to dioceses, Provinces, and Executive Council; and be it further*

*Resolved, That the Standing Commission on the Structure of the Church be directed to work with the Executive Council and the provincial leadership to study and make recommendations to the 74th General Convention in the following areas:*

- **The role and responsibilities of provinces regarding the sharing of national and regional program resources;**
- **The future of Province IX, working with the Standing Commission on World Mission and the individual dioceses.**

**Citation:** General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Denver, 2000* (New York: General Convention, 2001), p. 516.