

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

**RESOLUTION NO.:** 2018-A144  
**TITLE:** Diocesan Missional Review  
**PROPOSER:** Task Force on the Episcopacy  
**TOPIC:** Mission Strategy

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**Directly Related:** (Attached)

2015-A100 On the Topic of Assessing Diocesan Viability and Vitality (Rejected)  
2015-C031 Request Study of the Number and Size of Dioceses  
2003-A075 Charge Dioceses to Foster a Culture of Mission

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

2006-A038 Develop Diocesan Level Leadership Programs  
2000-D015 Urge Adoption of Guidelines on Employment Practices in the Church Workplace

**Supplemental Documents:** (Linked)

(*Blue Book*) Report to General Convention, [Task Force on the Episcopacy](#), see pages 722-723.

*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.*

# A144 Diocesan Missional Review

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| <b>Proposer</b>         | Task Force on the Episcopacy                     |
| <b>Topic</b>            | Mission Strategy                                 |
| <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 the 79th General Convention finds it to be in the best interests of The Episcopal Church that all dioceses and other jurisdictions of the Church engage in the process of a missional review periodically but no less often than prior to engaging in an episcopal search process; and be it further
  
- 2 *Resolved*, That missional reviews include, but not be limited to, asking questions such as:
  - Is the diocesan infrastructure capable of permitting people to exercise their ministries in healthy and life-giving ways? Is the staffing sufficient? Does it have the capacity to use its resources, and potentially, the resources of other dioceses?
  - Are the staff (including the bishop(s)) compensated appropriately, according to local diocesan guidelines and the recommendations of General Convention including pension contributions and healthcare and in a timely manner?
  - Is the diocese capable of fulfilling its financial obligations, including those in its own budget and its assessment to be paid to The Episcopal Church?
  - Is the diocese capable of deploying and implementing programs for the congregations (i.e., safe church training, anti-racism training, stewardship programs, vestry training, festivals and meetings)?
  - Are the diocesan properties safe, sound, and insured? Are there resources (financial or otherwise) available to assist congregations in crisis?
  - Are there enough people to fill leadership roles to implement mission and vision?
  - Is there enough spiritual health in the congregations?
  
- 3 And be it further
  
- 4 *Resolved*, That dioceses participating in a missional review be urged to seek collaboration and a sharing of ideas and visions with surrounding dioceses; and be it further
  
- 5 *Resolved*, That the knowledge, insights, and wisdom gained by a missional review be used to help define the gifts and talents that a bishop might bring to the diocese.

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## EXPLANATION

It has become more commonplace for a clergy vacancy within local congregations of a diocese to prompt a time of discernment beyond that particular congregation. Dioceses are encouraging individual congregations to look for synergies and opportunities within a wider missional area as a matter of practice – and separately from the existence of a vacancy in the clergy leadership. Through

the work of partnerships, shared ministry, and regional teams, individual congregations whose resources to stand alone may be insufficient have found and are finding new models for combination and collaboration and for being the Church in their mission field(s). A missional review process would prompt a diocese to engage in a comparable discernment and reflection process, regardless of an anticipated or existing episcopal vacancy.



**Resolution Number:** 2015-A100  
**Title:** On the Topic of Assessing Diocesan Viability and Vitality  
**Legislative Action Taken:** Rejected  
**Text of Resolution:**

*Resolved*, the House of Bishops concurring, That the 78th General Convention encourages Bishops and Dioceses to prayerfully engage in a candid assessment of the viability and vitality of their Dioceses and to seek creative possibilities for enhancing the viability and vitality of their Dioceses, and be it further

*Resolved*, That the Standing Commission of the Structure of the Church support these efforts by developing and making available tools and processes for such processes and by facilitating conversations and communications about processes for increasing the viability and vitality of Dioceses.



**Resolution Number:** 2015-C031  
**Title:** Request Study of the Number and Size of Dioceses  
**Legislative Action Taken:** Concurred as Substituted  
**Final Text:**

*Resolved, That the 78th General Convention ask that the bishops and dioceses of The Episcopal Church create, nurture, and develop a culture of collaboration that results in new structures, partnerships, and practices on the interpersonal, group, and organizational levels; measurable outcomes of performance; standards of accountability, reporting and mutual ministry reviews at all levels (bishops, clergy, diocesan bodies); and be it further*

*Resolved, That the 78th General Convention encourages Dioceses to explore opportunities for collaboration, and possibly merging, with contiguous Dioceses, to better carry out their common mission; and be it further*

*Resolved, That the 78th General Convention urge the bishops and diocesan leadership of The Episcopal Church to engage in frank discussion about the number and size of our dioceses across the church, diocesan collaboration, vitality, and shared ministry, and what change is needed; and be it further*

*Resolved, That the Planning Committee of the House of Bishops is requested to set aside time this Triennium to discuss issues of diocesan vitality; and be it further*

*Resolved, That The Standing Commission on the Structure of the Church is directed to seek input from the above conversations and to study opportunities and challenges of diocesan collaboration, vitality, shared ministry, and the number and size of dioceses, and to 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), pp. 462-463.



**Resolution Number:** 2003-A075  
**Title:** Charge Dioceses to Foster a Culture of Mission  
**Legislative Action Taken:** Concurred as Amended  
**Final Text:**

*Resolved, That every diocese in The Episcopal Church be charged to:*

- **foster a missional perspective or culture;**
- **foster a culture of partnering with others (congregations, denominations, etc.) for mission and ministry;**
- **equip people to facilitate congregational self-study and strategic planning, including the impact of the congregation's life-cycle in its transformation for mission;**
- **and that bishops organize visitations around these principles.**

**Citation:** General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Minneapolis, 2003* (New York: General Convention, 2004), p. 336.