

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

**RESOLUTION NO.:** 2018-A227  
**TITLE:** Communion Across Difference  
**PROPOSER:** 13 - Committee to Receive the Report of Resolution A169  
**TOPIC:** Structure

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**Directly Related:** (Attached)

2015-A037 Appoint an Expanded Task Force on the Study of Marriage  
2015-A300 Express Mind of the House on the Marriage Resolutions  
2012-A050 Create a Task Force on the Study of Marriage  
2003-A029 Commit to Open Dialogue on Issues Facing the Church and Society

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

2015-A036 Amend Canon I.18 [Of the Solemnization of Holy Matrimony]  
2000-D039 Acknowledge Relationships Other Than Marriage and Existence of Disagreement  
1997-A071 Commend and Urge Continuing Dialogue on Questions of Sexuality

*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.*

# A227 Communion Across Difference

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<b>Proposer</b>	13 - Committee to Receive the Report of Resolution A169
<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>	HD / 13 - Committee to Receive the Report of Resolution A169
<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 direct the Presiding Bishop and the President of the House of Deputies to appoint jointly a Task Force on Communion across Difference, consisting of not more than 14 people, who represent the diversity in this Church including members from countries other than the United States; and be it further
  
- 2 *Resolved*, That half of the members appointed hold that marriage is a “covenant between a man and a woman” (BCP, 422), half of whom hold that marriage is a “covenant between two people” in the presence of God (Resolution 2018-A085), and that all of those appointed seek a pathway toward mutual flourishing in The Episcopal Church; and be it further
  
- 3 *Resolved*, That the Task Force seek a lasting path forward for mutual flourishing consistent with this Church’s polity and the 2015 “Communion across Difference” statement of the House of Bishops, affirming (1) the clear decision of General Convention that Christian marriage is a covenant open to two people of the same sex or of the opposite sex, (2) General Convention’s firm commitment to make provision for all couples asking to be married in this Church to have access to authorized liturgies; and also affirming (3) the indispensable place that the minority who hold to this Church’s historic teaching on marriage have in our common life, whose witness our Church needs; and be it further
  
- 4 *Resolved*, That the Task Force consult widely with members of this Church who represent its diversity of cultural background, age, race, gender, gender identity, and sexual orientation, particularly its members in countries other than the United States; and also with representatives from the Anglican Communion, our full-communion ecumenical partners, and those churches with whom we carry on ecumenical dialogues; and be it further
  
- 5 *Resolved*, That the Task Force report and make recommendations to the 80th General Convention, ending its term at that time except by further action of General Convention; and be it further
  
- 6 *Resolved*, That the General Convention request the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget and Finance to consider a budget allocation of \$75,000 for the implementation of this resolution.

**EXPLANATION**

No explanation.



**Resolution Number:** 2015-A037  
**Title:** Appoint an Expanded Task Force on the Study of Marriage  
**Legislative Action Taken:** Concurred as Amended  
**Final Text:**

*Resolved, That the 78th General Convention requests dioceses and parishes use the study materials on marriage provided in the last triennium by the Task Force on the Study of Marriage, namely the “Dearly Beloved” toolkit and the appended essays in their Blue Book report to this Convention; and be it further*

*Resolved, That the 78th General Convention directs the Presiding Bishop and President of the House of Deputies to appoint jointly an expanded Task Force on the Study of Marriage to continue this work, consisting of not more than 15 people, including theologians, ethicists, pastors, liturgists, and educators, who represent the cultural and theological diversity in the Church; membership should include some of the Task Force on the Study of Marriage appointed in 2012, some from dioceses outside the United States, and young adults; and be it further*

*Resolved, That the Task Force explore further those contemporary trends and norms identified by the Task Force on the Study of Marriage in the previous triennium, specifically regarding those who choose to remain single; unmarried persons in intimate relationships; couples who cohabitate either in preparation for, or as an alternative to, marriage; couples who desire a blessing from the Church but not marriage; parenting by single or and/or unmarried persons; differing forms of family and household such as those including same-sex parenting, adoption, and racial diversity; and differences in marriage patterns between ethnic and racial groups; and be it further*

*Resolved, That the Task Force consult with (i) individuals and couples within these groups about their experience of faith and church life; and (ii) the results of diocesan and parochial study of "Dearly Beloved" toolkit; and be it further*

*Resolved, That the Task Force explore biblical, theological, moral, liturgical, cultural, and pastoral perspectives on these matters, and develop written materials about them which represent the spectrum of understanding in our Church and which include responses from theologians, ethicists, pastors, liturgists, social scientists, and educators who are not members of the expanded Task Force, and whose perspectives represent the spectrum of understandings on these matters in our Church; and be it further*

*Resolved, That the Task Force study and monitor, in consultation with the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music, the impact of same-sex marriage and rites of blessing on our Church; the continuing debate about clergy acting as agents of the state in officiating at marriages; and any other matters related to marriage by action of or referral by this Convention; and be it further*

*Resolved, That the Task Force report and make recommendations to the 79th General Convention; and be it further*

*Resolved, That the Task Force provide educational and pastoral resources for congregational use on these matters that represents the spectrum of understandings on these matters in our Church; 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 \$90,000 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), pp. 702-704.



**Resolution Number:** 2015-A300  
**Title:** Express Mind of the House on the Marriage Resolutions  
**Legislative Action Taken:** Adopted  
**Final Text:**

**We the House of Bishops of The Episcopal Church wish to express our love and appreciation to our colleagues who identify as Communion Partners and those bishops who have affinity with the Communion Partners’ position as stated in their “Communion Partners Salt Lake City Statement.” Our time together in Salt Lake City, in conversation and in prayer, has demonstrated how profoundly the love of God in Jesus binds us together and empowers us for service to God’s mission. As we have waited upon the leading of the Holy Spirit in our deliberations, we have been reminded that the House of Bishops is richly gifted with many voices and perspectives on matters of theological, liturgical, and pastoral significance. This has been shown in our discernment with respect to doctrinal matters relative to Christian marriage. We thank God for the rich variety of voices in our House, in our dioceses, in The Episcopal Church, and in the Anglican Communion, that reflect the wideness of God’s mercy and presence in the Church and in the world.**

**We give particular thanks for the steadfast witness of our colleagues in the Communion Partners. We value and rely on their commitment to The Episcopal Church and the Anglican Communion. We recognize that theirs is a minority voice in the House of Bishops in our deliberations with respect to Christian marriage; and we affirm that they are an indispensable part of who we are as the House of Bishops of the Episcopal Church. Our church needs their witness. Further, we appreciate that each of us will return to dioceses where there will be a variety of responses to Resolutions A054 and A036. The equanimity, generosity, and graciousness with which the Communion Partners have shared their views on Christian marriage and remain in relationship is a model for us and for the lay and ordained leaders in our dioceses to follow. We thank God that in the fullness of the Holy Trinity we can and must remain together as the Body of Christ in our dioceses, in the Episcopal Church, and in our relationships with sisters and brothers in Christ in the Anglican Communion. The bonds created in baptism are indeed indissoluble and we pray that we have the confidence to rely upon the Holy Spirit who will continue to hold us all together as partners in communion through the love of God in Jesus.**

**Citation:** General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Salt Lake City, 2015* (New York: General Convention, 2015), pp. 378-379.



**Resolution Number:** 2012-A050  
**Title:** Create a Task Force on the Study of Marriage  
**Legislative Action Taken:** Concurred as Substituted  
**Final Text:**

*Resolved, That the 77th General Convention direct the Presiding Bishop and President of the House of Deputies to appoint a task force of not more than twelve people, consisting of theologians, liturgists, pastors, and educators, to identify and explore biblical, theological, historical, liturgical, and canonical dimensions of marriage; and be it further,*

*Resolved, That the task force consult with the Standing Commission on Constitution and Canons and The Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music to address the pastoral need for priests to officiate at a civil marriage of a same-sex couple in states that authorize such; and be it further*

*Resolved, That the task force consult with couples living in marriage and in other lifelong committed relationships and with single adults; and be it further,*

*Resolved, That the task force consult with other churches in the Anglican Communion and with our ecumenical partners; and be it further*

*Resolved, That the task force consider issues raised by changing societal and cultural norms and legal structures, including legislation authorizing or forbidding marriage, civil unions, or domestic partnerships between two people of the same sex, in the U.S. and other countries where The Episcopal Church is located; and be it further*

*Resolved, That the task force develop tools for theological reflection and norms for theological discussion at a local level; and be it further*

*Resolved, That the task force report its progress to the 78th General Convention; 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 \$30,000 for the implementation of this resolution.*

**Citation:** General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Indianapolis, 2012* (New York: General Convention, 2012), pp. 521-522.



**Resolution Number:** 2003-A029  
**Title:** Commit to Open Dialogue on Issues Facing the Church and Society  
**Legislative Action Taken:** Concurred as Amended  
**Final Text:**

*Resolved, That the 74th General Convention of The Episcopal Church commit itself to foster moral deliberation on social questions, seeking to be a community where open, passionate, and respectful deliberation of challenging, contemporary issues is expected and encouraged; engage those of diverse classes, genders, ages, races, disabilities, engaging cultures, sexual orientation, and perspectives so that our limited horizons might be expanded and our witness in the world enhanced; address the issues faced by the people of God, in order to equip them for their discipleship and citizenship in the world; and be it further*

*Resolved, That in addition to the curricula identified and developed in accordance with Resolution A009 of the 73rd General Convention which provide guided conversation around sexual orientation, in particular "Room for Grace Dialogue", the 74th General Convention direct the Peace and Justice Ministries Office and Ethnic and Women's Ministries and, where appropriate, the Committee on Anti-Racism of the Executive Council and other groups to collaborate in further developing models and trainers, lay and ordained, to guide conversations on difficult issues facing our church and societies today and to promulgate their use; 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 \$28,000 for implementation of this resolution, including \$6,000 for planning the process and printing materials, \$20,000 to bring trainers from dioceses and provinces together to learn the process and \$2,000 to sustain the process.*

**Citation:** General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Minneapolis, 2003* (New York: General Convention, 2004), p. 630f.