

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

RESOLUTION NO.: 2018-C005
TITLE: Appoint Task Force to Study Implementation of Canon III.1
PROPOSER: Virginia
TOPIC: Lay Ministry

Directly Related: (Attached)

2012-D023 Affirm Episcopalians as Evangelists to Grow the Church
2009-A065 Identify and Support Church Evangelists
2009-C080 Direct Assistance for Dioceses to Develop Programs in Baptized Ministry
1988-A121 Add Canon III.1 [Of the Ministry of All Baptized Persons]

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

2000-D057 Urge Congregations to Offer Bible Study Programs

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.

C005 Appoint Task Force to Study Implementation of Canon III.1

Proposer	Diocese of Virginia
Topic	Lay Ministry
Endorsed by	
Sponsored by	
Page numbers	Blue Book: p. N/A; Constitution & Canons: p. 67
HiA / Leg. Cttee	HB / 15 - Ministry
Current Status	Resolution Filed
Version	Original (as filed)
Review Status	Not yet reviewed

RESOLUTION TEXT

- 1 *Resolved*, the House of _____ concurring, That the 79th General Convention, in recognition of the Jesus Movement and the calling of all the baptized in their daily life and work, appoint a task force to study the implementation of
- 2 Title III, CANON 1: Of the Ministry of All Baptized Persons which reads:
- 3 Sec. 1. Each Diocese shall make provision for the affirmation and development of the ministry of all baptized persons, including: (a) Assistance in understanding that all baptized persons are called to minister in Christ's name, to identify their gifts with the help of the Church and to serve Christ's mission at all times and in all places. (b) Assistance in understanding that all baptized persons are called to sustain their ministries through commitment to life-long Christian formation;
- 4 and be it further
- 5 *Resolved* That such task force be appointed by the Presiding Officers jointly and that a report be given to the 80th General Convention with its recommendations for the implementation of Canon III.1 in all parishes, dioceses, provinces, and the wider church, focusing on full engagement of all the Baptized in their ministries beyond Sunday in their daily life, work, and leisure.

EXPLANATION

Canon III.1 has been underutilized. For example, few dioceses have a Commission on Lay Ministry or its equivalent that focuses on empowering all the Baptized in their daily life. This resolution seeks to provide a remedy. The Canon calls on The Episcopal Church to “equip the saints for ministry” (Ephesians 4). Adopted in 2003, it provides the skeleton that now needs to be enlivened. In the Catechism under The Ministry (BCP 855) the first order of ministry is lay persons. They represent the 99 % of The Episcopal Church. The Baptismal Covenant (BCP 304-5) is the “job description” for all the baptized in their respective orders. This task force’s work is to recommend processes so that the church can affirm the calling of all the baptized, especially its lay persons, and empower them in all

the areas of their ministry in work, home, community, and wider world as well as in the Church.



Resolution Number: 2012-D023
Title: Affirm Episcopalians as Evangelists to Grow the Church
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 77th General Convention see the decline in membership as a call to action; and be it further

Resolved, That this General Convention affirm that through the baptismal covenant, the five marks of mission, and membership in the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society, all Episcopalians are called to be evangelists who help grow the church and the Kingdom of God; and be it further

Resolved, That this General Convention give thanks for the work of the Office of Congregational Vitality and the Office of Emergent Church and Church Planting and increase their budget allocations with the goal of growing membership.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Indianapolis, 2012* (New York: General Convention, 2012), p. 325.



Resolution Number: 2009-A065
Title: Identify and Support Church Evangelists
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Substituted
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 76th General Convention affirm the Church's teaching that all Christians are called to bear witness to Christ wherever they may be and to proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ, and that this Convention equally affirm with Saint Paul that Christ has given to the Church evangelists to build up the Body of Christ; and be it further

Resolved, That this Convention direct the Center for Evangelism and Congregational Life to gather the voices and wisdom of evangelists, and encourage the sharing of information and deepening of relationships among them through all available ways, such as social networking sites, conference calls and meetings at conferences; and be it further

Resolved, That all dioceses are urged, through their Commissions on Ministry or other appropriate bodies, to identify and call forth evangelists, and to ensure that there are adequate training programs and materials available for evangelism, including web-based resources, appropriate to the demographic, cultural and theological diversities of their geographic area; and be it further

Resolved, That this Convention direct the Center for Evangelism and Congregational Life to support dioceses in the training of evangelists by developing training materials and programs; by creating and making widely available resources in different languages, for example Spanish, French, etc., to identify and develop the gifts and skills of effective evangelists; and by establishing mechanisms for sharing locally developed best practices, experiences and resources; and be it further

Resolved, That the Center for Evangelism and Congregational Life solicit from Commissions on Ministry or other appropriate diocesan bodies information on local programs utilized for the identification and development of evangelists, so that such resources can be widely shared among dioceses; and be it further

Resolved, That the Center for Evangelism and Congregational Life report on the gatherings, diocesan programs, training materials and resources and on their effectiveness in developing skills of evangelism to the 77th General Convention.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Anaheim, 2009* (New York: General Convention, 2009), p. 280.



Resolution Number: 2009-C080
Title: Direct Assistance for Dioceses to Develop Programs in Baptized Ministry
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 76th General Convention call upon the Executive Council, provinces, dioceses and congregations to promote and develop the discernment that all of daily life and work is ministry, calling for the intentional exercise of the Baptismal Covenant promises in all sectors of public as well as private life; and be it further

Resolved, That, as mandated in Canons III.1 and 2, Executive Council urge and assist diocesan Commissions on Ministry to promote and develop programs that will engage baptized persons in ministry discernment, and support congregations in providing processes for such discernment in community; and be it further

Resolved, That the Office of Lay Leadership and Ministry Development and the Standing Commission on Ministry Development be directed to assist provinces and dioceses in concrete ways that support the full realization of the ministries of the baptized, both on Sunday and beyond, so that parishes may serve as ministry development “base camps” for all who seek to live their faith in every part of daily life.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Anaheim, 2009* (New York: General Convention, 2009), p. 713.



Resolution Number: 1988-A121
Title: Add Canon III.1 [Of the Ministry of All Baptized Persons]
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred
Final Text:

Resolved, That a new Canon 1 be added to Title III as follows:

CANON 1.
Of the Ministry of all Baptized Persons

Each Diocese shall make provision for the development and affirmation of the ministry of all baptized persons in the Church and in the world.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Detroit, 1988* (New York: General Convention, 1989), p. 552.