

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

**RESOLUTION NO.:** 2018-D016  
**TITLE:** Seeking Truth, Reconciliation and Restoration  
**PROPOSER:** Ms. Julia Harris  
**TOPIC:** Structure

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**Directly Related:** (Attached)

2015-D054 Refer a Resolution on Violence Against Women (Referred)  
1994-A049 Encourage Ministries That Respond to Violence Against Women  
1991-B052 Establish a Committee on Sexual Exploitation

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

2012-A139 Endorse Efforts Against Gender Violence  
2006-A156 Adopt Policies for Protection from Sexual Misconduct  
2003-A030 Develop Educational Resources Based on 21st Century Survey Data  
2000-C025 Urge a Response to Issues of Sexual and Domestic Violence  
1988-A077 Request the Presiding Bishop to Appoint a Committee on the Status of Women  
1985-C023 Eradicate Institutional Sexism and Pursue Affirmative Action  
1976-D029 Promote Programs Concerning Discrimination Against Women in the Church

*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.*

# D016 Seeking Truth, Reconciliation and Restoration

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<b>Proposer</b>	Ms. Julia Harris
<b>Topic</b>	Structure
<b>Endorsed by</b>	Brock, The Rev. Laurie; Loya, The Very Rev. Craig
<b>Sponsored by</b>	
<b>Page numbers</b>	Blue Book: p. N/A; Constitution & Canons: p. N/A
<b>HiA / Leg. Cttee</b>	HD / 03 - Safeguarding and Title IV
<b>Current Status</b>	On House of Deputies Calendar
<b>Version</b>	Original (as filed)
<b>Review Status</b>	Passed review

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## RESOLUTION TEXT

- Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, That the 79th General Convention as the Body of Christ, confess our sins of gender-based discrimination, harassment, and violence against women and girls in all their forms as we understand these sins, which include, but are not limited to, sexual and gender-based harassment, sexual assault, physically, spiritually, and emotionally abusive behavior, and oppression based on gender, particularly as these sins have denigrated and devalued women and their ministries; acknowledge that within our patriarchal culture, the misuse of power and authority is primarily exercised by men with the vast majority of victims being women; have created a culture of excuses, justifications, enabling, and dishonesty around gender-based discrimination and violence; have not heard the experiences of women with the goal of justice through acts of contrition, restoration, and reconciliation; and be it further,
- Resolved*, That the 79th General Convention calls the Church to turn from the systems of oppression, patriarchy, heteronormativity, white supremacy, and our colonial legacy, among them, and seek to engage in restoration of the dignity of women and reconciliation from past acts, beginning with confessing to God and to one another the truth that we have not loved God with our whole heart, and mind, and strength, and that we have not loved, respected, and honored the presence, gifts, equality, and ministry of women, seeing in them the presence of Christ; we have embraced patriarchal power, and in doing so, have exploited women and been blind to injustice and prejudice; and we seek to repent and be restored to God and to each other; with the church and each diocese declaring a period of fasting and repentance for this sin; and be it further,
- Resolved*, That the 79th General Convention authorize the establishment of a Task Force for Women, Truth, and Reconciliation for the purpose of helping the Church engage in truth-telling, confession, and reconciliation regarding gender-based discrimination, harassment, and violence against women and girls in all their forms by those in power in the Church, making an accounting of things done and left undone in thought, word, and deed, intending amendment of life, and seeking counsel, direction, and absolution as we are restored in love, grace, and trust with each other through Christ; and be it further,
- Resolved*, That this Task Force be appointed jointly by the President of the House of Deputies and the Presiding Bishop, with 15 members - 6 lay people (at least 4 of whom identify as women),

6 priests or deacons members (at least 4 of whom identify as women), and 3 bishops members (at least 2 of whom identify as women). The overall composition of this task force shall include members of the LGBTQ+ community, people of color, and reflect regional diversity. This Task Force shall report its progress to Executive Council, present a public timeline, summary of ongoing work easily accessible by members of the Episcopal Church, and report back to the 80th General Convention on the following tasks:

- 5 -To conduct a review of statistics, responses, and data regarding gender-based discrimination, harassment, and violent behavior that has been experienced by those who identify as women in our church; and present this information in accessible, public, and informative ways as a truthful reality of the treatment of women; and the impact of this treatment on lay and ordained women and girls, their ministries, and the ministry of the Church;
- 6 -To create a Truth and Reconciliation process to guide churches, dioceses, provinces, and the general Church as they develop their own paths for reconciliation and restoration, with emphasis given to discerning the *qualities* of methods churches, dioceses, provinces, and the general Church may implement to witness the truth and to seek justice, restoration, and reconciliation; recognizing a one-size-fits-all process will not be helpful given the diversity of our Church, and that identifying qualities for a process invites churches, dioceses, provinces, and general Church to map their ways forward to justice, restoration, and reconciliation with guidance;
- 7 -To conduct a comprehensive internal audit and analysis of the internal church-wide structures that exist, or are needed, to educate and inform the Church about the realities and consequences of gender-based discrimination, harassment, and violence against women and girls in all their forms; to develop programs to proactively reduce incidences of gender-based discrimination, harassment, and violence within the church; as well as to develop resources that build the capacity of the Church to provide trauma informed pastoral care for victims;
- 8 -To oversee an external audit conducted by an outside auditor of the culture within church-wide structures in order to identify systemic expressions of power and leadership that create and continue gender-based discrimination, harassment, and violence against women and girls in all their forms, particularly the impact of this system as it manifests in access to leadership, pay inequity, imbalances in power, inequality in leadership, gender-based discrimination, sexual harassment and violence, and the enabling of gender-based violence by those in positions of power throughout the church that diminishes, excuses, and discounts discrimination, abuse, and harassment, contrary to the Gospel of Christ; and be it further
- 9 *Resolved*, That the General Convention request that the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget, and Finance consider a budget allocation of \$280,000 for the implementation of this resolution which will provide funding for regular meetings, including bi-annual in-person meetings throughout the triennium (\$150,000); contract with external firm to conduct a culture audit (\$65,000); website, communications, and staff support (\$50,000); and expenses

associated with in-person presentations of findings to strategic groups, including Executive Council, the House of Bishops, and other groups as determined by the Task Force, the Presiding Bishop and the President of the House of Deputies (\$15,000).

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**EXPLANATION**

Our faith is replete with the presence of women and their ministry. Women have proclaimed the Gospel, cared for the sick, prophesied, and ministered. The Church has long benefited from the gifts and ministry of women. The Church has also discriminated, harassed, dismissed, and abused women. In the past year, women in our culture and in our Church have boldly and bravely named these acts of abuse, harassment, and denigration, as well as those who have perpetrated and benefited from those acts.

We as a community of believers find ourselves in a cultural moment of reckoning for the sins of patriarchy as well as gender-based discrimination and violence. Now is the time to speak truth to the oppressive power of gender-based discrimination and violence and other abuses of power that demean children of God. Acknowledging that patriarchy, along with heteronormativity, white supremacy and our colonial legacy, are overlapping layers of oppression and domination, is the work of the church. This work continues with confessing these sins, seeking justice, pursuing reconciliation, and being catalysts for restoration. We seek to repent, so that we can be credible bearers of the Good News of Jesus Christ's reconciling love for the world, and we seek to act for justice, restoration, and reconciliation.



**Resolution Number:** 2015-D054  
**Title:** Refer a Resolution on Violence Against Women  
**Legislative Action Taken:** Referred  
**Final Text:**

*Resolved, That the General Convention deeply regret the lack of progress in stemming the global pandemic of violence against women, in spite of the call of the 76th Convention #2009-D096 for bishops, clergy, and lay leadership to educate themselves on the problem; and be it further*

*Resolved, That a task force be appointed to prepare and distribute educational materials electronically, in the next triennium, encouraging Episcopal clergy and congregations to speak out, according to the 4th Mark of Mission, to transform the unjust silence of society in the face of this widespread practice of violence; 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 \$30,000.00 (\$10,000 per year) 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. 427.



**Resolution Number:** 1994-A049  
**Title:** Encourage Ministries That Respond to Violence Against Women  
**Legislative Action Taken:** Concurred  
**Final Text:**

*Resolved, That this 71st General Convention condemn violence against women in all its forms, and resolves that each deputy and bishop will work toward making the Episcopal Church a truly safe place for all God's people, by encouraging every parish to develop appropriate ministries to this end; and be it further*

*Resolved, That the Committee on the Status of Women continue to raise awareness about the Church's role in responding to violence against women by supporting extension of the consultation process in every province and diocese, providing resource people and educational materials for use in regional and local programs, and securing outside funds to support training local planners and presenters.*

**Citation:** General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Indianapolis, 1994* (New York: General Convention, 1995), p. 146.



**Resolution Number:** 1991-B052  
**Title:** Establish a Committee on Sexual Exploitation  
**Legislative Action Taken:** Concurred As Amended  
**Final Text:**

*Resolved, That the 70th General Convention of the Episcopal Church declares that sexual abuse, exploitation, coercion, and harassment of adults and minors by clergy and church employees are abuses of trust, a violation of the Baptismal Covenant, contrary to Christian Character, and are therefore wrong; and be it further*

*Resolved, That the 70th General Convention of the Episcopal Church establish a Committee on Sexual Exploitation to be appointed by the Presiding Bishop and the President of the House of Deputies to work with the Office of Pastoral Development. It shall be the duty of the Committee on Sexual Exploitation to study, educate, develop curriculum, and propose policy and standards of conduct on sexual abuse, exploitation, coercion, and harassment, and to advise the Office of Pastoral Development as resource persons. The membership of the committee is to be representative as to sex, race and ethnic diversity. The Committee will report to the 71st General Convention.*

**Citation:** General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Phoenix, 1991* (New York: General Convention, 1992), p. 783.