

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

**RESOLUTION NO.:** 2018-D020  
**TITLE:** Understanding the Truth of Sexual Harrassment and Assault in The Episcopal Church  
**PROPOSER:** The Rev. Laurie Brock  
**TOPIC:** Structure

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**Directly Related:** (Attached)

2006-A156 Adopt Policies for Protection from Sexual Misconduct  
2003-A023 Establish a Task Force for the Prevention of Sexual Misconduct  
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)

(None)

**Supplemental Documents:** (Linked)

*Sexual Misconduct in the United Methodist Church: US Update*, [General Commission on the Status and Role of Women in the UMC](#), Summer 2017.

*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.*

# D020 Understanding the Truth of Sexual Harrassment and Assault in The Episcopal Church

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<b>Proposer</b>	The Rev. Laurie Brock
<b>Endorsed by</b>	Harris, Ms. Julia ; Gunn, The Rev. Canon Scott
<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>	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 appoint a task force to develop a survey on 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 harassment, sexual assault, physical, spiritual, and emotionally abusive behavior, and oppression based on gender. This survey shall be modeled on the survey used to gather information and compile the 2017 report “Sexual Misconduct in the United Methodist Church: US Update”; and be it further
- 2 *Resolved*, That the task force shall be appointed jointly by the President of the House of Deputies and the Presiding Bishop, with 9 members - 3 lay people (at least 2 of whom identify as women), 3 priests or deacons members (at least 2 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 at least 5 members who have experienced gender-based discrimination, harassment, and violence against women and girls and at least 3 members who have personal and recent experience working with complaints within the general Church and/or secular community on matters of gender-based discrimination, harassment, and violence against women and girls. This task force shall report its progress to Executive Council at regular and timely intervals as determined by the task force, the Presiding Bishop, and the President of the House of Deputies; and be it further
- 3 *Resolved*, That the task force shall create said survey no later than December of 2019 and shall work with appropriate general Church organizations, dioceses, and church leadership, both lay and clergy, to distribute widely in the Episcopal Church for access by both laity and clergy no later than spring of 2020, said survey being available primarily on-line, and with adaptations made as determined by the task force to enable responses by those members of the general Church who may not have ready and easy access to the internet; and be it further
- 4 *Resolved*, That the task force shall write a report detailing the responses to the survey, a summary of the responses to the survey, and particular insights and observations by the task force, with said report being publicly disseminated and available to the Episcopal Church online no later than early 2021. The report will be provided to the following members and organizations

of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America: The House of Bishops, The Executive Council, The National Association of Episcopal Schools; all Episcopal Seminaries (including diocesan formation programs for ordination); Episcopal Camps and Conference Centers; all Canons to the Ordinary; all Transition Officers; and any other bodies, organizations, or committees that the President of the House of Deputies or the Presiding Bishop deem necessary. Those persons and organizations are requested to report back to the Task Force no later than April 30, 2021 with the following written responses to the report, a copy of the same responses shared with the Presiding Bishop and the President of the House of Deputies:

1) How their body and/or institution has contributed to a church culture of gender-based discrimination, harassment, and violence against women and girls in all their forms, when appropriate detailing specific examples of this culture that has approved of this behavior, ignored and/or excused this behavior, and how this culture has damaged the body and/or institution; 2) The body and/or institution's plan of action within their body or institution that can bring about a culture of truth telling, repentance, reconciliation, and justice in our church; including a timeline of said plan of action; 3) And any other questions the task force, in consultation with the Presiding Bishop and the President of the House of Deputies, deem helpful and necessary for the general Church to confess the truth of the impact of the sin of gender-based discrimination, harassment, and violence against women and girls in all their forms and to engage the process of restoration and reconciliation; and be it further

- 5 *Resolved*, That the task force shall review these responses and forward them to the appropriate board, committee, and/or task force so they may be evaluated and utilized as the general Church moves to restoration and reconciliation with Christ and each other over our sins of gender-based discrimination, harassment, and violence; and be it further
- 6 *Resolved*, That the General Convention request that the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget and Finance consider a budget allocation of \$40,000 for the implementation of this resolution, including two face-to-face meetings of the task force, costs associated with creating and disseminating the survey and the subsequent report.

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#### EXPLANATION

The truth-telling of the #metoo movement of women, girls, as well as men, who have been victims of gender-based discrimination, harassment, and violence confronts us with a truth particularly women have been speaking for centuries, yet has been ignored. This truth cannot be ignored anymore, particularly in the Church.

As the Body of Christ in the world, we are called in a particular way to model the Gospel mandate of confession and reconciliation. This Resolution begins this process, inviting us to be courageous in our truth-telling. The Episcopal Church does not yet know the full truth of the experience of gender-based discrimination, harassment, and violence inflicted upon its clergy and laypeople by those in power and the systems of the Church that do not respect the dignity of every human being.

Other denominations have modeled this work for us. In 2017, the United Methodist Church surveyed

4300 lay and clergy leaders about sexual misconduct. The results of that survey indicated that 64% of clergy and 31% of laity had experienced sexual misconduct in the church, ranging from assault to inappropriate comments to uncomfortable touching and closeness. We propose adapting that survey for the Episcopal context so that we can begin the process of sharing the truth of gender-based discrimination, harassment, and violence in our church, that we may be guided by Christ in the work of reconciliation and justice.



**Resolution Number:** 2006-A156  
**Title:** Adopt Policies for Protection from Sexual Misconduct  
**Legislative Action Taken:** Concurred as Substituted  
**Final Text:**

*Resolved, That the 75th General Convention of The Episcopal Church affirm the work already occurring in many dioceses and at the same time recommit itself to the positions taken by previous General Conventions that sexual misconduct (encompassing both sexual harassment and sexual exploitation) of adults by clergy, church employees, and volunteer workers has been and continues to be of deep concern to this Church, is an abuse of trust, a violation of the Baptismal Covenant, contrary to Christian character and is, therefore, wrong; and be it further*

*Resolved, That each diocese adopt policies for the protection from sexual misconduct of those served by diocesan programs, those who volunteer in the work of the diocese or are employed by the diocese, and that dioceses assist congregations in the development of such procedures and policies, including using the many resources that already exist, that address the following:*

1. **the articulation of behavioral standards for all clergy, lay employees, and volunteers who work with adults or who provide pastoral counseling, pastoral care, spiritual direction, or the sacraments;**
2. **a screening process for all clergy, lay employees, and volunteers who provide pastoral counseling and care, spiritual direction, or the sacraments and who supervise clergy or lay volunteers;**
3. **education and training for all clergy, lay employees, and volunteers as listed above, with particular attention paid to what legally constitutes sexual harassment and to appropriate behavior and inappropriate sexual or sexualized behaviors towards adults, and with periodic refresher training encouraged;**
4. **guidelines for responding to concerns of sexual misconduct; and be it further**

*Resolved, That each diocese shall report to the House of Bishops Committee on Pastoral Development prior to the Spring 2009 House of Bishops meeting with a copy of its adopted and implemented policy and an evaluation of the history of its use. A summary report shall be made to the House of Bishops Spring 2009 meeting and a full report made to the 76th General Convention.*

**Citation:** General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Columbus, 2006* (New York: General Convention, 2007), p. 667.



**Resolution Number:** 2003-A023  
**Title:** Establish a Task Force for the Prevention of Sexual Misconduct  
**Legislative Action Taken:** Concurred as Amended  
**Final Text:**

*Resolved, That the General Convention establish, pursuant to Joint Rule 23, a Task Force of not less than ten nor more than fifteen persons. These persons should be laity, bishops, priests, and deacons with experience and expertise in dealing with sexual misconduct in church settings. Membership should include, but not be limited to representatives from the Standing Commission on Ministry Development, the Council of Seminary Deans, the Nathan Network, the National Network of Episcopal Clergy Associations, the Task Force on Disciplinary Policy and Procedures, and the National Network of Lay Professionals; and be it further*

*Resolved, That the Task Force shall study and gather information concerning matters of institutional wellness for the prevention of sexual misconduct. Its study shall include such concerns as screening, selection and training of clergy, lay employees and volunteers; monitoring and supervision; behavior management; incident investigation; and the articulation of pastoral standards and codes of ethical behavior; and be it further*

*Resolved, That each body named shall recommend Task Force members from its own membership, and the appointments shall be overseen by the Bishop of the Office of Pastoral Development. Additional members shall then be appointed by the Bishop of the Office of Pastoral Development, and the entire Task Force shall include at least two bishops, two clergy, and two laity. The Task Force shall have the services of the Office of Pastoral Development and a Church Pension staff person; and be it further*

*Resolved, That a report be made to the Standing Commission on Ministry Development, as well as to the 2006 General Convention; and be it further*

*Resolved, That the General Convention request the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget and Finance to consider the allocation of \$50,000 for the implementation of this resolution.*

**Citation:** General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Minneapolis, 2003* (New York: General Convention, 2004), p. 216f.



**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.