

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

RESOLUTION NO.: 2018-D049
TITLE: Churchwide Fund for Clergy Education
PROPOSER: The Rev. Philip Dinwiddie
TOPIC: Theological Education

Directly Related: (Attached)

2009-C013 Request Funds for Students Preparing for Ordained Ministry
2009-C072 On the Topic of Financial Support for Seminarians Through SIM (Rejected)
2006-B006 Respond to Crisis of Educational Debt for Future Clergy
2003-A064 Convene a Partnership to Address the Issue of Seminarian Debt

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

2012-D049 Launch Seminary Student Loan Program

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.

D049 Churchwide Fund for Clergy Education

Proposer	The Rev. Philip Dinwiddie
Endorsed by	Schellhammer, The Rev. Judith; Anderson, Ms. Elizabeth
Sponsored by	
Page numbers	Blue Book: p. N/A; Constitution & Canons: p. 41
HiA / Leg. Cttee	/
Current Status	Pre-Filed Resolution
Version	Original (as filed)
Review Status	Not yet reviewed

RESOLUTION TEXT

- 1 *Resolved*, the House of _____ concurring, That this church establish The Priest Development Plan of this church for all domestic dioceses, parishes, missions and other ecclesiastical organizations or bodies subject to the authority of this church, for the support of postulants and candidates to the priesthood who are studying in theological seminaries officially affiliated with The Episcopal Church, in accordance with the following principles:
- 2 1. The Priest Development Plan shall be designed and administered by the Trustees and officers of the Church Pension Fund, following best industry practices;
- 3 2. The Priest Development Plan shall provide benefits to financially support postulants and candidates to the priesthood;
- 4 3. The Priest Development Plan shall provide benefits through the Episcopal Church Education Trust, which shall be established through the authorization of this resolution, and shall be the sole sponsor for such benefits and continue to be operated on a financially sound basis;
- 5 4. The Priest Development Plan shall have a church-wide advisory committee that is representative of the broader church and appointed by the Church Pension Fund, and such church-wide advisory committee shall receive an annual report about the status of the Priest Development Plan;
- 6 5. For the purposes of this resolution, the term “domestic” shall mean ecclesiastical organizations and bodies located in the United States, including the Dioceses of Puerto Rico and Virgin Islands;
- 7 6. The Church Pension Fund shall continue to work with the Dioceses of Colombia, Convocation of American Churches in Europe, Dominican Republic, Ecuador Central, Ecuador Litoral, Haiti, Honduras, Micronesia, Taiwan and Venezuela to make recommendations with respect to the provision and funding of priest education under the Priest Development Plan; and

8 7. The implementation of the Priest Development Plan shall be completed as soon as practicable, but in no event later than by the end of 2021

9 And be it further

10 *Resolved*, That Canon I.8 shall be amended as follows:

11 Sec. 1. The Church Pension Fund, a corporation created by Chapter 97 of the Laws of 1914 of the State of New York as subsequently amended, is hereby authorized to establish and administer the clergy pension system, including life, accident and health benefits, of this Church, substantially in accordance with the principles adopted by the General Convention of 1913 and approved thereafter by the several Dioceses, with the view to providing pensions and related benefits for the Clergy who reach normal age of retirement, for the Clergy disabled by age or infirmity, and for the surviving spouses and minor children of deceased Clergy. The Church Pension Fund is also authorized to establish and administer the lay employee pension system, and denominational health plan of the Church, substantially in accordance with the principles adopted by the General Convention of 2009 in Resolution 2009-A177, with the view to providing pensions, health care and related benefits for the eligible Clergy and eligible lay employees of this Church, as well as their eligible beneficiaries and dependents. *The Church Pension Fund is also authorized to establish and administer the Priest Development Plan of the Church, substantially in accordance with the principles adopted by the General Convention of 2018 in Resolution [this resolution number], with the view to providing support to postulants and candidates to the priesthood who are studying in theological seminaries officially affiliated with The Episcopal Church.*

12 Sec. 3. For the purpose of administering the pension system, The Church Pension Fund shall be entitled to receive and to use all net royalties from publications authorized by the General Convention, and to levy upon and to collect from all Parishes, Missions, and other ecclesiastical organizations or bodies subject to the authority of this Church, and any other societies, organizations, or bodies in the Church which under the regulations of The Church Pension Fund shall elect to come into the pension system, assessments based upon the salaries and other compensation paid to Clergy by such Parishes, Missions, and other ecclesiastical organizations or bodies for services rendered currently or in the past, prior to their becoming beneficiaries of the Fund. For the purpose of administering the lay employee pension system and denominational health plan, The Church Pension Fund shall be entitled to collect from all Parishes, Missions, and other ecclesiastical organizations or bodies subject to the authority of this Church, and any other societies, organizations, or bodies in the Church which under the regulations of The Church Pension Fund shall elect to come into the lay employee pension system, assessments and/or contributions based upon the salaries and other compensation paid to eligible lay employees by such Parishes, Missions, and other ecclesiastical organizations or bodies, determine the eligibility of all Clergy and lay employees to participate in the denominational health plan through a formal benefits enrollment process, and The Church Pension Fund shall be entitled to levy upon and

collect contributions for health care and related benefits under the denominational health plan from all Parishes, Missions, and other ecclesiastical organizations or bodies subject to the authority of this Church with respect to their Clergy and lay employees. *For the purpose of administering the postulant and candidate support system, The Church Pension Fund shall be entitled to levy upon and to collect from all Parishes, Missions, and other ecclesiastical organizations or bodies subject to the authority of this Church, and any other societies, organizations, or bodies in the Church which under the regulations of The Church Pension Fund shall elect to come into the support system, assessments based upon the salaries and other compensation paid to Clergy by such Parishes, Missions, and other ecclesiastical organizations or bodies for services rendered.*

EXPLANATION

This resolution is patterned on 2009-A177, which established the Denominational Health Plan and directed the Trustees and Officers of the Church Pension Fund to design and administer that plan. The Priest Development Plan would follow a similar model.

Funding for the Priest Development Plan would be accomplished through assessments of individual Parishes, Missions, etc. based upon the salaries and other compensation paid to their clergy. A parish with a single part-time clergy person would be assessed much less than a parish with multiple full-time clergy persons; thus the collection would be fairly assessed according to an organization's means.

Assessments would be collected into an "Episcopal Church Education Trust." Funds from this trust would be disbursed annually according to a design established by the Trustees and Officers of the Church Pension Fund to support postulants and candidates to the priesthood.

What amount might this assessment be, and how much could it raise?

In 2016 and 2017, the last two years for which we have information, the Church Pension Fund received assessments paid into the Clergy Plan of \$83 million in each year (footnote 1). A 0.7% increase in the 18% assessment on clergy compensation would result in \$3.23 million annually to be put towards clergy formation in Episcopal seminaries.

How much financial assistance might individual postulants and candidates receive from this plan?

The most recent "State of the Clergy" report by the Church Pension Group (footnote 2), lists ordinations between 2009-2012 at 714 total. Since many seminary programs last three years we can use this number as a rough estimate of the number of postulants and candidates in Episcopal Seminaries in any particular year. Dividing \$3.23 million by 714, we arrive at just more than \$4,500. This is an estimate of the annual stipend a seminarian supported by their diocese might receive.

The Church benefits from having educated clergy. So do individual mission organizations. It is appropriate for Parishes, Missions, and other ecclesiastical organizations and bodies subject to the authority of this Church to support the education of the clergy that serve them.

1 “Assessments paid to CPF on behalf of the participants in the Clergy Plan, the Lay Plan and the Staff Plan were \$83 million, \$5 million and \$9 million, respectively, during the year ended March 31, 2017 and \$83 million, \$5 million and \$13 million, respectively, during the year ended March 31, 2016.” 2017 Annual Report of the Church Pension Fund; Page 28. Found in June, 2018 at <https://www.cpg.org/global/about-us/forms-publications/>

2 Priest ordinations. 2003-2005: 1,076; 2006-2008: 1,038; 2009-2011: 714 in 2010 – 382; in 2013 – 355; in 2016 – 322. 2012 State of the Clergy. Published by CPG. Page 4. Found in June 2018: <https://www.cpg.org/linkservid/DC3EE5A8-F95C-2278-107475F87BFDB2AA/showMeta/o/?label=State%20of%20the%20Clergy%202018>



Resolution Number: 2009-C013
Title: Request Funds for Students Preparing for Ordained Ministry
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 76th General Convention of The Episcopal Church request the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget and Finance to provide funding in the coming triennium in the amount of \$100,000 in year one, \$150,000 in year two and \$200,000 in year three for the purpose of providing needs-based scholarships for postulants and candidates for ordination; and be it further

Resolved, That said funds be administered and distributed to needy students through the existing Scholarship Program of the Society for the Increase of the Ministry (SIM), said Society having an established record of 151 years experience in administering scholarship grants to postulants and candidates for ordination; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention direct SIM to report annually to the Executive Council on this work and its effectiveness in meeting the needs of the future ordained leaders of this Church and that the Executive Council, in turn, provide a full report to the 77th 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 \$450,000 for the implementation of this resolution.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Anaheim, 2009* (New York: General Convention, 2009), pp. 713-714.



Resolution Number: 2009-C072
Title: On the Topic of Financial Support for Seminarians Through SIM
Legislative Action Taken: Rejected
Final Text:

Resolution died with adjournment. See Legislative History for original text of resolution.

Citation:



Resolution Number: 2006-B006
Title: Respond to Crisis of Educational Debt for Future Clergy
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 75th General Convention mandate that the Standing Commission on Ministry Development design strategies for raising awareness and responding to the crisis of educational debt for those preparing for ordained ministry in the Church; and be it further Resolved, That the Standing Commission on Ministry Development in consultation with the Church Pension Fund, the Executive Council, the Office of Mission and Ministry, the diocesan Commissions on Ministries, the Office of Ministry Development, and the Society for the Increase of Ministry, shall share their results and recommendations with Proclaiming Education for All (PEALL) following each meeting of the Standing Commission on Ministry Development, annually to the House of Bishops, and to the 76th General Convention.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Columbus, 2006* (New York: General Convention, 2007), pp. 684-685.



Resolution Number: 2003-A064
Title: Convene a Partnership to Address the Issue of Seminarian Debt
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Substituted
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 74th General Convention direct the Standing Commission on Ministry Development to convene a partnership including members from the Church Pension Fund, the Episcopal Church Foundation, the Society for the Increase of the Ministry, the Episcopal Evangelical Education Society, the Council of Seminary Deans, and any other appropriate groups to address the urgent issue of seminarian debt and report back to the 75th General Convention with recommendations. This committee will include in its consideration the following points:

- **determining the feasibility of amortizing seminary loan payments over the course of a cleric's career;**
- **including seminarian debt in the pension premium of parochial/institutional clergy, distributed over the course of a cleric's career;**
- **dioceses and congregations committing a greater proportion of income to the support of people preparing for ordination and lay professions;**
- **seeking funding support for the debt reduction of newly ordained persons who serve in priority mission areas that are under-served and under-funded, including new church plants, multicultural and specialized cultural ministries and rural areas; and**
- **the development of a fund to defray the educational expenses of seminarians through partnerships.**

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Minneapolis, 2003* (New York: General Convention, 2004), p. 475f.