

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

RESOLUTION NO.: 2018-D085
TITLE: Communion Relationship with Church of Sweden
PROPOSER: The Rev. Canon. Elise Johnstone
TOPIC: Ecumenism

Directly Related: (Attached)

2015-B004 Commend Report on Relations with Church of Sweden
2009-A076 Begin a Dialogue with the Church of Sweden

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

None

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.

D085 Communion Relationship with Church of Sweden

Proposer	The Rev. Canon. Elise Johnstone
Endorsed by	Mather, Mrs. Ashley ; Gerbracht, Dr. Frederick
Sponsored by	
Page numbers	Blue Book: p. N/A; Constitution & Canons: p. N/A
HiA / Leg. Cttee	/
Current Status	Pre-Filed Resolution
Version	Original (as filed)
Review Status	Not yet reviewed

RESOLUTION TEXT

- Resolved*, the House of _____ concurring, That the 79th General Convention acknowledge and affirm the existing communion relationship between The Episcopal Church and the (Evangelical Lutheran) Church of Sweden, in furtherance of the 78th General Convention’s Resolution B004, which received and commended the “Report on the Grounds for Future Relations Between the Church of Sweden and The Episcopal Church,” and called on the Presiding Bishop to explore ways for the relationship with the Church of Sweden to be deepened, and which communion relationship was formally celebrated during a Eucharist service at Uppsala Cathedral, Sweden in November 2015, a service led by former Episcopal Church Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori, at the invitation of Presiding Bishop Michael Curry, and the Church of Sweden Archbishop Antje Jackelén; and be it further
- Resolved*, That the 79th General Convention charge the Presiding Bishop to prepare, in concert with the Church of Sweden, a memorandum of understanding setting forth the terms and procedures of the communion between The Episcopal Church and the Church of Sweden.

EXPLANATION

Following the November 2015 celebration Eucharist, former Presiding Bishop Jefferts Schori wrote that “The relationship between the Svenska Kyrkan (Church of Sweden) and The Episcopal Church has been a gift to both for nearly three centuries. Recognizing and affirming that as a full-communion relationship will enable us to be far stronger partners in God’s mission. We share a great deal, beginning with histories of migration, and we have very similar ways of worship, doing theology, and engaging ecumenical and interreligious dialogue.”

The two churches have acted as communion partners for almost 300 years. This communion is reflected in General Convention resolutions A076 (2009). This resolution acknowledged and affirmed that communion partnership as it exists today and has existed for several centuries, and the resolution further charged the churches to deepen that partnership through recognized structures of communion.

The relationship between the two churches dates to the mid-18th century, when in Delaware, New Jersey and Pennsylvania there were instances of Eucharistic sharing and priests serving across denominations. The communion relationship was enhanced further in the 19th century when the

Episcopal Church created Swedish missions for Swedish immigrants to the U.S. In these Episcopal churches services were held in the Swedish language, and the Episcopal Church authorized Swedish Church priests to exercise sacramental and pastoral ministry in our churches. Further, each church has entered into local full-communion agreements between Anglicans and Lutherans.

Through this centuries-long communion, the two churches have shared similar understandings of theology, liturgy, ecclesiology, missiology and ecumenism. The two churches continue to hold these similar positions and views.

The Church of Sweden is a member of the Porvoo Statement of 1992, which proclaimed full communion among Protestant and Anglican churches in 15 European countries, including the British and Irish Anglican churches and the Nordic and Baltic Lutheran churches: pursuant to Porvoo the Church of England is in full communion with the Church of Sweden.



Resolution Number: 2015-B004
Title: Commend Report on Relations with Church of Sweden
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 78th General Convention receive the Report on the Grounds for Future Relations Between the Church of Sweden and The Episcopal Church, and commend it to all members of The Episcopal Church; and be it further

Resolved, That the 78th General Convention direct the Presiding Bishop and the Standing Commission on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations or its successor body to work with the Church of Sweden to deepen the relationship.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Salt Lake City, 2015* (New York: General Convention, 2015), p. 666.



Resolution Number: 2009-A076
Title: Begin a Dialogue with the Church of Sweden
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 76th General Convention direct the Standing Commission on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations to begin a dialogue with the appropriate ecumenical offices of the Church of Sweden, the ultimate goal of which is to reach a relationship of full communion between The Episcopal Church and the Church of Sweden; and be it further Resolved, That the Standing Commission do so in consultation with the Standing Inter-Anglican Commission on Unity, Faith and Order.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Anaheim, 2009* (New York: General Convention, 2009), p. 515.