

There was discussion and clarification by Chancellor David Beers.

Motion carried
Resolution adopted

A Resolution on Theological Consensus

Bishop Griswold called on the Rt. Rev. Pierre Whalon, Bishop in Charge of the Congregations in Europe who introduced and spoke to the following resolution.

Resolved, That the House of Bishops ask the Presiding Bishop and the Theology Committee of the House of Bishops to name a panel of the best available theologians in the Episcopal Church to compose a theological study that presents the case for the expansion of the Church's teaching on sexuality, marriage, and same-sex unions/partnerships and their blessing; and be it further

Resolved, That the Presiding Bishop and the Theology Committee of the House of Bishops appoint a panel of the best available Episcopal theologians to compose a theological study arguing against the case for the expansion of the Church's teaching on sexuality, marriage, and same-sex unions/partnerships and their blessing; and be it further

Resolved, That the Presiding Bishop and the Theology Committee of the House of Bishops invite theologians of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the Anglican Communion, the Roman Catholic Church, the Orthodox Churches, and the Old Catholic Churches, to write a comment addressing both studies; and be it further

Resolved, That the members of these two committees meet together for conversation, discussions and dialogue; and be it further

Resolved, That these studies and companion comments be presented as one Report to the House of Bishops at its meeting in the fall of 2005, with a view towards commending it to the wider church.

Explanation: Recent actions of the 74th General Convention have shown that there is support among a majority of Bishops and Deputies that gay people living in partnerships with another are full members of the Episcopal Church, with the right to live their relationship openly and with the Church's approval. A number of study documents and General Convention resolutions have already provided some basis for this change. However, there exists no statement that sets forth the theological grounds for our expansion of the teaching on marriage. Moreover, the General Convention by a clear majority did not approve the creation of rites for blessing of same-sex unions, allowing however for local diocesan practices to continue in their diversity, some blessing same-sex unions and ordaining gay people in partnerships, some continuing to refuse to do either, and some allowing one but not the other.

The need to prepare a theological study for the Episcopal Church has therefore never been greater. From the needs of our education programs, to conversations with our ecumenical partners, and most of all, for the eventual reconciliation within the Episcopal Church and the Anglican Communion, we must make every effort to provide a theological study of the highest quality that can inform the debate and

discussion at every level of the Church's life. Without it we shall continue to be "blown about by every wind of doctrine" (Eph. 4:14).

It was then moved that this Resolution be referred to the Presiding Bishop's Committee on C051.

Motion carried
Resolution referred

Resolution on Confirmations in the Diocese of Ohio

Bishop Griswold called on the Rev. Mark Hollingsworth, bishop-elect of Ohio, who introduced the following resolution.

We, the members of the House of Bishops, meeting at Camp Allen for our Spring meeting in March 2004, say to the Church, and particularly to the Church gathered in the Diocese of Ohio, that we repudiate and deplore the unilateral actions of the five bishops of the Episcopal Church, USA who crossed diocesan jurisdictional boundaries and entered the Diocese of Ohio on Sunday, March 14 to confirm and to celebrate the Eucharist without the knowledge and permission of the Bishop of Ohio. Bishops FitzSimmons Allison, former Bishop of South Carolina, Maurice Benitez, former Bishop of Texas, William Cox, former Assistant Bishop of Oklahoma, Alex Dickson, former Bishop of West Tennessee and William Wantland, former Bishop of Eau Claire, joined in the celebration of the Holy Eucharist, and in so doing used the sacrament of unity in Christ as an instrument of division and defiance. Secretive in its planning, their action was discourteous, disruptive and a willful violation of our Constitution and Canons.

We are keenly aware of the concerns of people of our church who are in disagreement with their bishops and the decisions of the 74th General Convention. As their pastors, it is our hope and expectation that they will share their views directly with their bishops. In our continuing efforts to care pastorally for all of our people, at this meeting we have endorsed a plan for Delegated Episcopal Pastoral Oversight. We are committed to responding generously and pastorally to requests made in accordance with this plan.

We expect all of our colleagues in the House of Bishops to be models of reconciling behavior, even when we disagree with one another. We have prayerfully considered the use of the disciplinary canons in response to the actions in Ohio. In the spirit of our commitment to reconciliation, we choose a different course. We invite these five bishops to meet with the Presiding Bishop's Council of Advice to discuss their actions. Further, we want them to hear about the work we continue to do as bishops who embrace the ministry of reconciliation for the mission of the whole church, which as our Prayer Book tells us is "to restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ."

At the same time, we hold these five bishops, and one another, accountable for the good order of the Church, the Body of Christ. Therefore, in the future any bishop