
RESOLUTIONS PASSED AT THE 233rd CONVENTION OF THE DIOCESE OF NEW JERSEY

The following resolutions were passed at the 233rd Convention of the Diocese of New Jersey held in Princeton, New Jersey on March 3–4, 2017.

The Statements in Support by the proposers are not part of the resolutions as passed and are thus omitted here but can be found in the Final Report of the Committee, Document 29.

This report includes the Marks of Mission Minimum Giving Resolution that was proposed by the Finance and Budget Committee as part of the Treasurer's Report, Document 38.

The following texts are subject to correction by the Committee on Validation of the Minutes, as provided in Canon 6 of the Diocese of New Jersey.

RESOLUTION 2017-1:

Subject: 250th Anniversary of The Corporation for the Relief of the Widows and Children of Clergy in the Communion of the Church of England in America

Be it resolved, That the 233rd Convention of the Diocese of New Jersey salute, commend, and rejoice in the extraordinary ministry of The Widows Corporations throughout the dioceses of New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania as they prepare to celebrate the 250th Anniversary of their founding in 1769; and be it

Further resolved, That this Convention submit the following Resolution to the 79th General Convention of the Episcopal Church in 2018:

Resolved, the House of _____ concurring, that this 79th General Convention extend its warmest congratulations to The Corporation for the Relief of the Widows and Children of Clergy in the Communion of the Church of England in America and its successors, commonly known as The Widows Corporations of New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania, upon the 250th Anniversary of its founding in 1769, as well as to those similar Corporations that were established subsequently; and be it further

Resolved, That this Convention recognize the extraordinary ministry not only to the widows, but also to the families of clergy carried out by The Widows Corporations for these two and one-half centuries of service; and be it further

Resolved, That this Convention declare the months from October 2018 through October 2019 as a period of special focus on the needs of families of clergy throughout The Episcopal Church; and be it further

Resolved, That this Convention encourage every diocese of The Episcopal Church to seek to define the particular needs of the families of their clergy and to develop ways to address those needs, looking to the models developed by the various iterations of The Widows Corporation where they already exist for ideas and assistance in implementing such programs as may be helpful in addressing those needs.

EXPLANATION

The Widows Corporation was founded in 1769 to respond to the needs of widows and children of Anglican clergy who sometimes found themselves destitute in an age before the Church Pension Fund, Social Security, Medicare, and social service agencies. The agency took various forms in the colonies. In Pennsylvania an extensive life insurance program evolved, with wide participation now in all dioceses of the Commonwealth. A grant program for widows followed, and in recent years a Wellness program of grants to the dioceses to meet health-related needs. In New York and New Jersey the focus has been on annuities.

Although the Church Pension Fund and social welfare agencies now provide the fundamental support, clergy families today do experience difficulties not addressed by such agencies. The several Widows Corporations now serve an estimated 1,900 Episcopal clergy and their families in the states of New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. Similar organizations are found in a few other parts of the Church as well. This resolution seeks to recognize the good work that has been done so far, and, building on this base, to encourage a Church-wide effort to explore the particular needs of clergy families, and to respond with effective help in new ways.

RESOLUTION 2017-2:

Subject: Becoming a Sanctuary Diocese

Be it resolved, That, in obedience to the many biblical injunctions imploring us not to wrong or oppress the alien in our midst and Jesus' own mandate to extend care for the stranger, and in faithfulness to the sacred promises of Holy Baptism, the 233rd Convention of the Diocese of New Jersey declares the Diocese of New Jersey to be a Sanctuary Diocese; and be it

Further resolved, That the Diocese of New Jersey, as people of faith and people of conscience, pledge to challenge and question any unjust immigration law, policy, or practice that is inconsistent with our biblical mandate to "not wrong or oppress a resident alien" (Exodus 22:21); and be it

Further resolved, That the Diocese of New Jersey connect with The Episcopal Church, sister dioceses, and local and national sanctuary communities and institutions, immigrant rights groups and coalitions, and engage in educating, organizing, advocacy, and direct action, and other methods as deemed appropriate in each context, to ensure the safety and security of the undocumented community; and be it

Further resolved, That this Convention urge congregations of the Diocese of New Jersey to become Sanctuary Congregations, serving as places of welcome, refuge, healing, and other forms of material and pastoral support for those targeted for deportation due to immi-

gration status or some perceived status of difference, and that we work alongside our friends, families, and neighbors to ensure the dignity and human rights of all people; and be it

Further resolved, That this Diocese assist in equipping congregations, clergy and lay leaders to engage in such work, appropriate to local contexts, capacity, and discernment.

RESOLUTION 2017-3:

Subject: Becoming a Sanctuary Church

Be it resolved, That this 233rd Convention of the Diocese of New Jersey Convention submit the following Resolution to the 79th General Convention of the Episcopal Church in 2018:

Resolved, the House of _____ concurring, that the 79th General Convention of The Episcopal Church, in obedience to the many biblical injunctions imploring us not to wrong or oppress the alien in our midst and Jesus' own mandate to extend care for the stranger, and in accordance with our Baptismal Covenant and in the spirit of being inclusive, reaffirms resolution 2015-D057 supporting the New Sanctuary Movement; and be it further

Resolved, That The Episcopal Church urge its members, as people of faith and people of conscience, pledge to challenge and question any unjust immigration law, policy, or practice that is inconsistent with our biblical mandate to "not wrong or oppress a resident alien" (Exodus 22:21); and be it further

Resolved, That The Episcopal Church recommend that its dioceses and congregations become places of sanctuary, serving as places of welcome, refuge, healing, and other forms of material and pastoral support for those targeted for deportation due to immigration status or some perceived status of difference, and that we work alongside our friends, families, and neighbors to ensure the dignity and human rights of all people; and be it further

Resolved, That The Episcopal Church encourage its members to connect with local and national sanctuary communities and institutions, immigrant rights groups and coalitions, and engage in educating, organizing, advocacy, and direct action, and other methods as deemed appropriate in each context, to ensure the safety and security of the undocumented community, and to assist in equipping congregations, clergy and lay leaders to engage in such work, appropriate to local contexts, capacity, and discernment.

EXPLANATION

As a people of faith committed to dismantling oppressive systems and building structures and communities that reflect God's compassion and justice, we must do nothing less than make straight a highway in the desert for our sisters and brothers. The bible has numerous injunctions that instruct us not to wrong or oppress the alien in our midst (Exodus 22:21 & 23:9, Leviticus 19:33, 23:22 & 24:22, Numbers 15:16, Deuteronomy 24:20-21 & 27:19, Jeremiah 7:6-7, Zechariah 7:10, and Malachi 3:5). Jesus is clear that the righteous inherit eternal life because "I was a stranger and you welcomed me" (Matthew 25:35). He also makes clear that our failure to address his need results in the condemnation of the unrighteous because "I was a stranger and you did not welcome me" (Matthew 25:43). Our baptismal vows require us to "seek and serve Christ in all persons" and to "strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being" (Book of Common Prayer p. 305).

For many years, immigrants and their families have suffered on the margins of our society. They have been scapegoated during difficult economic times and victimized by harsh anti-immigrant sentiment.

In the aftermath of statements made during the presidential campaign of 2016, there is heightened concern that rhetoric villainizing immigrants will become policy that targets our siblings in the family of God because of their immigration status, political or religious beliefs.

This resolution puts our faith into action by standing with the growing number of cities, colleges, and communities of faith declaring themselves places of welcome, refuge, and healing, for those targeted for deportation due to immigration status or some perceived status of difference or barred from entry to this country, as we work alongside our friends, families, and neighbors to ensure the dignity and human rights of all people.

RESOLUTION 2017-4:

Subject: Supporting the Welfare of Animals

Be it resolved, That this 233rd Convention of the Diocese of New Jersey affirms the responsibility of all people to be stewards of God's creation, and recognizes that a spiritual disconnection with God's creatures has led to the abuse and exploitation of animals for commercial gain, sport, and as tools for laboratory research; and be it

Further resolved, That the Diocese encourage parishes to engage in education and awareness programs on animal welfare concerns, such as those provided by the Animal Welfare Team of the Diocese, and to consider appropriate responses, including animal-friendly lifestyle changes; and be it

Further resolved, That the Diocese encourage individuals and parishes to seek opportunities to advocate for the humane treatment of animals, especially in areas of special concern such as factory farms, puppy mills, and animals used for laboratory testing; and be it

Further resolved, That the Diocese encourage the use of Authorized Rites and other liturgical materials made available by the Diocese for use in a variety of settings to provide pastorally for people caring for animals, especially at times of loss and bereavement.

RESOLUTION 2017-5:

Subject: Publication of Diocesan Journal

Be it resolved, That the Secretary of Convention be hereby instructed to prepare, compile and publish a Journal of this Diocesan Convention no later than September 1, 2017, and to send two copies of the Journal to the Secretary of the House of Deputies of the General Convention of the Episcopal Church as required by the Canons of The Episcopal Church, and to send two copies to the Archives of the Church as required by the Canons of The Episcopal Church, and to distribute one copy to each member of the clergy who is canonically resident in the Diocese and one copy to each church in the Diocese; and be it

Further resolved, That the Secretary of the Convention be hereby instructed to insert in the Journal the Bishop's report of the State of the Diocese as required by the Canons of The Episcopal Church.

MARKS OF MISSION MINIMUM GIVING RESOLUTION

Be it resolved that:

1. the current "Fair Share" giving calculation table be renamed the Marks of Mission Minimum Giving Table;
2. a Board of Consultation be constituted immediately, constituted of nine members – a chairperson and eight additional lay and clergy persons appointed by the Bishop in consultation with the Standing Committee, Deans and Diocesan Council. Initial board membership terms shall be staggered, with three members having initial terms of 3 years, three members having initial terms of 4 years, and three members having initial terms of 5 years. Members shall be eligible for re-appointment for subsequent 3-year terms at the discretion and with the approval of the Bishop, Standing Committee, Deans and Diocesan Council;

-
3. the Board of Consultation be immediately empowered to grant reductions in the giving amount for any congregation based upon its work with said congregation;
 4. any congregation being granted such a reduction be required to develop a plan for financial and congregational growth;
 5. the giving amounts calculated using this table (as adjusted by the Board of Consultation if applicable) become mandatory for all congregations beginning with the calculation of giving for the 2020 calendar year;
 6. the Board of Consultation be charged with the implementation and oversight of the mutual accountability commitments made through the Marks of Mission Minimum Giving covenant, exercising its ministry in consultation with the Bishop, the Standing Committee, Deans and Diocesan Council; and
 7. the Standing Committee on Constitution & Canons is hereby directed to propose constitutional and canonical changes to conform our constitution and canons to this process at the 234th Convention in 2018.