

***Preparing for
General Convention 2009:
A resource for congregations***

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A message from Bishop Gray III

My sisters and brothers in Christ,

The booklet *Preparing for General Convention 2009: A Resource for Congregations* was published by The Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina's School of Ministry recently. It is to be used by parishes and missions seeking to have more information about the 76th General Convention and its role in The Episcopal Church and also in the Anglican Communion and we're happy to pass along this resource to you.

The forty page booklet contains information about how General Convention carries out its work and you may see on the back page of this insert who represents the Diocese of Mississippi.

I hope this booklet will be able to answer some of your questions about the polity of The Episcopal Church. If you wish to keep up with ongoing events and legislation, please log on to our diocesan website at www.dioms.org. Also, if you wish to download copies of the booklet, which are free, log on to www.episdionschool.org/article180593c2323326.htm

I ask your prayers for The Episcopal Church during our General Convention and especially our diocesan deputation.

Yours in Christ,

The Rt. Rev. Duncan M. Gray III
Bishop of Mississippi

**MEET OUR DEPUTIES TO THE 76TH GENERAL CONVENTION
Anaheim, California July 8-17, 2009**

House of Deputies

Deputies

(Clergy)

- The Rev. Chip Davis, Trinity, Natchez; Old River
- The Rev. Canon David Johnson, Diocesan Office, Jackson; Central
- The Very Rev. Edward O'Connor, St. Andrew's, Jackson; Central
- The Rev. Sylvia Czarnetzky, St. John's, Aberdeen; Tombigbee

(Laity)

- Dr. Anita George, Resurrection, Starkville; Tombigbee
- Dr. Ed Sisson, St. Peter's, Oxford; Northern
- Canon Kathryn W. McCormick, St. Andrew's, Jackson; Central
- Mrs. Bobbie Marascalco, Holy Trinity, Vicksburg; Old River

Alternates

(Clergy)

- The Rev. Dr. Ruth Black, St. Andrew's, Jackson; Central
- The Rev. David Knight, St. Patrick's, Long Beach; Coast

(Laity)

- Mrs. Margaret McLarty, St. Andrew's, Jackson; Central
- Mr. Ed Thurmond, St. Mary's, Lexington; Delta
- Mr. Danny Meadors, St. Patrick's, Long Beach; Coast
- Mr. Jack Conway, St. Philip's, Jackson; Central

Background information on the House of Deputies: The House of Deputies is the older of the two Houses of General Convention, the governing body of The Episcopal Church. It has equal numbers of clergy and lay deputies selected by the 110 dioceses and one convocation of congregations. The first session of the first General Convention, held in 1785, consisted only of the House of Deputies. It adopted a constitutional provision establishing a separate House of Bishops, which joined the Convention at its second session in 1789. The bicameral nature of the General Convention continues today. General Convention meets every three years to set the Episcopal Church's mission priorities, budget and policies.

The President of the House of Deputies (PHoD) is elected every three years to serve throughout the triennium. The President of the House of Deputies occupies a non-stipendiary position and serves as Vice President of the Executive Council and Vice President of the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society (DFMS). He/she presides over the House of Deputies at General Convention, appoints clergy and lay members of all the Standing Commissions and Legislative Committees, and performs many functions of liaison, development and opportunity between conventions.





The Bishop of North Carolina

Wednesday in Easter Week 2009

*And the king will answer them, "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me."
Matthew 25:40*

Brothers and Sisters,

Thomas Friedman in his book *The World Is Flat* showed rather convincingly how interrelated and interconnected we are in the world of internet, cyberspace and emerging technologies. News, information, events and actions occurring on one part of the planet can be communicated all over the planet in a matter of seconds. The present economic distress is not limited to one country or one part of the world. The impact is global. The words of the 16th century's John Donne have never been truer, "No man is an island entire unto itself."

The theme of our upcoming General Convention is *Ubuntu*. *Ubuntu* is a traditional African understanding of being human in community. Simply put, *Ubuntu* means "I am because we are." It means that no one is an island. It means that to be fully and truly human I need you to be me and you need me to be you. *Ubuntu* means that to be a person is to be a person in relationship and in community with others. That is how God has created us, for each other. Though we too often act as though we are the human race, we are in fact meant to be the human family of God. We were made for God and each other. That is the wisdom of the tradition of *Ubuntu* as Desmond Tutu and others like him have taught us.

In the parable of the last judgment Jesus taught us that the practical work of love, serving, caring and doing justice for one another is the standard of God's judgment. And the reason for that is that God has created us to be God's human family. "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me" (Matthew 25:40). In the teachings of Jesus, in his life and his Spirit,

Jesus has shown us the way to become the human family of God. The theme of *Ubuntu* is intended in part to help us as a church to claim anew that high calling.

My prayer is that this booklet will assist the people of our diocese in understanding the work of this, our 76th General Convention, and in praying for the work of the Convention as it seeks to help us become the human family of God. *Ubuntu!*

Keep the faith,
+Michael

The Right Reverend Michael B. Curry
XI Bishop of North Carolina

Introduction: Preparing for General Convention 2009

This booklet, a collaborative effort between the School of Ministry and the Deputation to the General Convention of the Diocese of North Carolina, is designed to be flexible for a variety of uses. Whether for individual or parish study, the booklet provides people throughout our diocese with some basic information about the General Convention:

- *the place of the General Convention in The Episcopal Church and Anglican Communion polity;*
- *how the General Convention carries out its work;*
- *who speaks for us;*
- *matters which will be before this Convention; and*
- *ways to become and remain informed during the Convention.*

We have chosen to present the information in a simple, straightforward way: as “frequently asked questions.” The questions serve as the table of contents. A person or group can read or study a few questions based on particular interests or work through the entire booklet. This format lends itself to study over several weeks.

Behind all of this is an understanding of the Body of Christ, wherein the Church, divided, with all of its failings that reflect human frailties, seeks nevertheless to live into God’s call to us to fulfill God’s mission on earth. The General Convention is an important part of the way by which The Episcopal Church seeks to engage in ministry.

In that light, the prayer at the end of this booklet is one we hope you will keep before you this July.

We commend to you also prayers in The Book of Common Prayer, particularly a Prayer for the Church (no. 7), for a Church Convention (no. 12) and for the Unity of the Church (no. 14) on pp. 816-18.

A number of deputies to General Convention have collaborated with us on this booklet for which we offer our thanks. We are especially grateful to The Hon. Martha Bedell Alexander, Head of the Deputation, for her

tremendous support, to Joseph S. Ferrell for his exceptionally fine editing and to Josephine H. Hicks and Lorraine Ljunggren for their contributions regarding, respectively, the Windsor Report and Anglican Covenant and “An Alternative Baptismal Covenant.”

*Leon Spencer
Dean (Retired)*

*Ayliffe Mumford
Interim Coordinator
The School of Ministry*

The School remains responsible for any errors or omissions. As this document will also be posted on our website, <http://www.episdioncschool.org>, please draw any corrections to our attention, so that we might make appropriate changes on our web pages.

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1. What is the General Convention?

The General Convention serves as The Episcopal Church's legislative body. It has authority to amend *The Book of Common Prayer* and the Church's Constitution and Canons, and determines the program and budget of the Church. It receives reports from various church committees, commissions, and agencies, formulates policy, and elects half of the 40 members of the Executive Council. It meets every three years. Visually and experientially, the General Convention reveals the breadth and diversity of the Church.

The Executive Council administers policy and program between these triennial gatherings.

It may be worth noting that while the General Convention is the governing authority for Episcopalians, our Church is also a part of the world-wide Anglican Communion. Within the Anglican Communion there are "Instruments of Unity." These are:

- The Archbishop of Canterbury;
- The Primates Meeting (all the archbishops and presiding bishops of the 38 autonomous "provinces" or churches recognized by the See of Canterbury);
- The Lambeth Conference (a gathering of bishops from throughout the Communion, at the invitation of the Archbishop of Canterbury, held every 10 years, most recently in 2008); and
- The Anglican Consultative Council (a representative body consisting of laity, clergy and bishops from each of the provinces).

While our commitment to our life together demands that we listen to and engage with our partners

throughout the Communion, no decisions by any of the “Instruments of Unity” are binding upon The Episcopal Church.

2. When and where is this one?

This, the 76th General Convention, meets in Anaheim, California from Wednesday, July 8th to Friday July 17th.

3. What are the origins of the General Convention in The Episcopal Church?

The General Convention’s origins go back to the immediate post Revolutionary War period. Left very much on its own after ending its ties with the Church of England, our church had no bishops and no central structure. Anglicans, in what was becoming the United States, had also lost both clergy and resources. If an Anglican church, separate from the Church of England, were to survive, it needed to resolve issues of polity.

Resolving these issues proved difficult. Suffice it to say decisions were made for bishops, clergy and laity—not simply a gathering of bishops—to come together as the first General Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America.¹ It would be the governing authority within the Church.

The first General Convention convened on September 27, 1785, in Christ Church, Philadelphia. They set in motion processes to adopt a constitution, write canons, secure episcopal consecrations, and establish a liturgy.

¹ There are two official names of The Episcopal Church: the most commonly used "The Episcopal Church" (abbreviated *TEC*), and "Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America (abbreviated *PECUSA*).

Within ten years the General Convention had agreed on its form of governance and its pattern of worship, both of which endure to the present day.

We ended up with a triennial General Convention, and it has continued ever since.

4. How is the General Convention structured?

Following the republican and democratic sentiments at the time of American independence, the General Convention became a bicameral structure (two “houses,” similar to the House of Representatives and the Senate in the U.S. Congress). Bishops—elected, not appointed (by the Crown or anyone else)—were to sit in a House of Bishops. Ordained and lay deputies—elected and equal in number—were to sit in a House of Deputies.

5. Who attends?

All Episcopal Church bishops, whether they are active or not, are entitled to attend and to have “seat, voice and vote” in the House of Bishops. (This General Convention will consider a resolution for a constitutional change to remove “vote” from bishops who have resigned their jurisdictions; this would be a “second reading” of the proposed change.)

Each of The Episcopal Church’s domestic and foreign dioceses², plus the Convocation of Churches in Europe and the Navajoland Area Mission, may elect eight deputies to the House of Deputies. Four of them are priests or deacons, and four lay persons. These eight

² The foreign dioceses are Haiti, Virgin Islands, Taiwan, Columbia, Dominican Republic, Central Ecuador, Litoral Ecuador, Honduras, Venezuela, and Puerto Rico.

are elected at their diocesan conventions.

In North Carolina, General Convention deputies are elected by majority vote of all in attendance at our diocesan convention, including both clergy and lay delegates. We do not permit a vote by orders for the election, as is the case in many dioceses.

There are four dioceses (Pittsburgh, Quincy, Fort Worth and San Joaquin) that have been re-organized after their bishops and some of their clergy and parishes withdrew from The Episcopal Church. They will have all new deputations and are served by provisional bishops. These deputies were elected at Special Conventions held in their dioceses.

Almost 900 deputies and around 300 bishops are expected to attend in 2009. Among deputies, some 43% are serving as deputies for the first time. Approximately 43% are women, and 16% are defined as from ethnic communities. Less than 3% are below the age of 30.

Also in attendance will be some international visitors, including this year, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Rowan Williams.

6. Why are the clergy and laity who are elected and attend called deputies?

There is a distinction between the terms *deputies* and *delegates*. If someone has been *delegated* to represent a group the implication is that the group may instruct that delegate as to what they wish the delegate to do or how to vote. To *deputize* someone implies far greater discretion. We call clergy and laity chosen from our dioceses *deputies*, with the message that deputies are to vote their conscience for the good of the Church. They

cannot be instructed to vote one way or another on the presumption that doing so would preclude godly debate and preempt the work of the Holy Spirit.

7. *Who speaks for the Diocese of North Carolina?*

Our bishops:

The Rt. Rev. Michael B. Curry, Bishop
The Rt. Rev. William O. Gregg, Assistant Bishop
The Rt. Rev. Alfred C. Marble, Assisting Bishop
The Rt. Rev. Robert C. Johnson, Jr., retired
The Rt. Rev. Robert W. Estill, retired
The Rt. Rev. Huntington Williams, Jr., retired
The Rt. Rev. J. Gary Gloster, retired

Our deputies from the clergy:

The Rev. Lisa G. Fischbeck
The Rev. Timothy E. Kimbrough,
The Rev. Lorraine Ljunggren
The Rev. Kevin B. Matthews

Our deputies from the laity:

The Hon. Martha Bedell Alexander, Head of the
Deputation
Mr. Joseph S. Ferrell
Ms. Alice B. Freeman
Ms. Margaret (Meg) McCann

Customarily, deputies are listed (clergy and laity) in the order of the number of votes received in the election.

In our diocese, the Head of the Deputation rotates from one Convention to the next between clergy and lay deputies, and is the deputy of the proper order (clergy or lay) with the most seniority. This year it is the laity's turn.

We also have alternates (numbered below, since in the

event a deputy cannot attend alternates are invited to serve in the order of their election).

Our alternate from the clergy is:

1. The Rev. Lawrence W. Womack

Our alternates from the laity are:

1. Ms. Josephine H. Hicks
2. Mr. C. Thomas Fennimore
3. Ms. Dana P. Gaspar

Many bishops and deputies are assigned to serve on committees during Convention. Bishop Curry will serve on the Evangelism Committee and Bishop Gregg will serve on the Committee on Canons. Our deputies will serve on the following committees:

Communications (Freeman); Constitution (Ferrell and Kimbrough, Vice Chair); Prayer Book, Liturgy, and Music (Ljunggren); and World Mission (Alexander, Secretary).

In practice, the like committees of each house meet jointly to conduct hearings and deliberate on matters referred to them, but each house's committee votes separately and reports to its own house.

8. What do they actually do?

Bishops and deputies at General Convention do more than discuss resolutions and vote. Each morning they, together with delegates and alternates to The Episcopal Church Women (ECW) Triennial, gather for Bible study and Holy Eucharist. The theme of this General

Convention is *Ubuntu*³. This theme will be complemented by Convention sub-themes of "Identity" and "Mission." Worship accords with the theme or reflects the church calendar's saints' days.

In addition, both Houses have chaplains who open and close sessions with prayer. Chaplains also pray before the consideration of important legislation.

Organizations within the church sponsor additional worship services, while volunteers staff a prayer room in which there is continual intercession for the work of Convention.

There is a festival Eucharist at which the United Thank Offering is presented. (The United Thank Offering is taken up in parishes twice per year for the mission of the Church.)

Mainly, however, there is the business of the Church to do. The Convention considers a variety of resolutions. It may address issues arising from the Canons of the Church (the laws that the Church uses to govern its actions), revise liturgy and adopt measures governing relations with other churches. Once every nine years, it elects a Presiding Bishop. Our current Presiding Bishop, The Most Rev. Dr. Katharine Jefferts Schori, was elected at the General Convention in 2006.

There are two kinds of resolutions, binding and non-binding. Binding resolutions reflect changes in the Church's Constitution, Canons and/or liturgy. All other resolutions express the "sense of the Convention" and are not binding. A resolution may clarify that the stance of a previous resolution remains the same (e.g., Resolution A142, for the church to recommit and

³ See Bishop Curry's letter for an explanation of *Ubuntu* (pronounced "oo-boon-too").

declare itself to be dedicated to continuing to work against the sin of racism for the next three triennia). Sometimes, time runs out before all measures that have gained committee approval can be acted upon by both houses. If this happens to a legislative resolution it is usually assigned to a task force or committee to continue to study it (this is what has happened with Title IV; see more about this legislative resolution in question 12, What is on the Agenda, The Canons of the Church).

A major part of the work of bishops and deputies who are appointed to the Convention's legislative committees is to attend and participate in committee discussion and recommend action on proposed resolutions and legislation (discussed in question 7 and further in question 10).

Persons with different points of view alternate in speaking during debates on the floor of the two Houses. There are, of course, rules of order, including those derived from the Constitution and Canons of the Church, the Joint Rules of Order and Roberts' Rules of Order.

9. Who presides at the General Convention?

The House of Bishops is chaired by the Presiding Bishop and Primate of The Episcopal Church, the Most Rev. Dr. Katharine Jefferts Schori, and in her absence, by the Vice Chair, The Rt. Rev. Richard S. O. Chang. They are assisted by the Secretary of the House of Bishops, The Rt. Rev. Kenneth L. Price; a Parliamentarian, The Rt. Rev. John Buchanan; and a Chair of the Committee on Dispatch, The Rt. Rev. Wayne Wright. The House of Bishops elects its officers toward the end of General Convention.

The House of Deputies is chaired by the President of the House, Bonnie Anderson, D.D. and in her absence, by the Vice President, the Rev. Brian Prior. They are assisted by the Secretary of the House of Deputies, the Rev. Dr. Gregory S. Straub and a Parliamentarian, Polly Getz. Along with his duties as Secretary, Gregory Straub is also the Executive Officer of the General Convention Office.

The House of Deputies will elect its officers throughout General Convention beginning with the Secretary and Treasurer at the opening legislative session. The President and Vice President will also be elected, but the times are not yet set. Each can serve up to three 3-year terms and they must be of different orders. The current President of the House of Deputies, Bonnie Anderson, D.D. was elected in 2006.

10. Where do resolutions come from and how are they handled?

There are four sources of resolutions that come before General Convention. They are organized by letter:

- **A** resolutions are from committees, commissions, agencies and boards of The Episcopal Church;
- **B** resolutions are from bishops;
- **C** resolutions are from dioceses and provinces; and
- **D** resolutions are from deputies.

For example, Resolution A185, Proposed Title IV Revisions, was filed by the Title IV Task Force, a committee of The Episcopal Church. Resolution C002, Commending the Rev. Dr. Pauli Murray to be included in Lesser Feasts and Fasts was filed by the Diocese of Newark. Our diocese has filed two resolutions, one similar to the Diocese of Newark resolution on Dr.

Murray, the other commending Manteo and Virginia Dare for inclusion in Lesser Feasts and Fasts. All resolutions are available at the General Convention website.⁴

Resolutions are assigned to legislative committees, which schedule hearings, combine like resolutions and recommend action, including adopting or rejecting the resolution. Convention staff help by researching past resolutions on similar issues so deputies are aware of the past stance of the Convention and what actions were taken.

The Presiding Bishop and the President of the House of Deputies appoint these legislative committees. Deputies and bishops are asked to indicate their preference for membership on committees, and the presiding officers make their decisions. (See the Committees on which our bishops and deputies serve in question 7.)

Each piece of legislation may have a public hearing. Anyone may attend and testify at hearings.

11. How does voting take place?

The House of Bishops and House of Deputies meet, deliberate and vote separately. To be enacted, resolutions must pass both houses in the identical form. Both houses have the right to amend legislation, but the amendment must be accepted by the other house.

In the House of Deputies three clerical or lay deputations from different dioceses may request what is called a “vote by orders”—clergy deputies being one order, and lay deputies being another. In a vote by

⁴ <http://gc2009.org/ViewLegislation/>.

orders each diocesan deputation has two votes: one clerical vote and one lay vote. To cast that vote the two orders of the deputation are polled separately and that order's vote is determined by majority vote. Thus, three members of the order must agree for the vote to be cast *yes* or *no*. Tied deputations count as *divided*. Because the Rules of Order of the House of Deputies require a majority of the votes cast in each order for passage of any question, the practical effect of a *divided* vote in one of the orders is the same as a *no* vote in that order. The clergy and lay orders of a deputation need not agree with each other, and often do not.

In the House of Bishops, each bishop in attendance has one vote on most measures. On some issues, such as consent to a consecration of a bishop, only bishops with jurisdiction have voting privileges.

12. What is on the agenda?

The *Blue Book* (officially titled *Reports to the 76th General Convention*) is mailed to bishops and deputies in advance. It contains reports of the committees, commissions, agencies, and boards for this latest triennium, and includes all **A** resolutions (see Question 10). The book provides a good indication of the most important items that will be on the agenda. As was already mentioned, the work of the Convention committees is to decide how resolutions will be handled so, though a resolution is filed, it may be combined with another or “die in committee.”

The following are a number of resolutions that will be on the agenda during this General Convention:

- ***Revision of Rules of Order:*** This year there are at least 20 resolutions to revise the Rules of Order for running the General Convention (**A10-A30**). There

are two major reasons why there are so many: 1) this is the first General Convention as presiding officers for both the Presiding Bishop and President of the House of Deputies, and 2) there is a renewed focus on mission in the Church. (See *World Mission* resolutions)

- ***The Millennium Development Goals:*** There are likely to be new resolutions regarding the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). At the 2006 General Convention MDGs were named as one of the mission priorities of the Church. A call for a continuation of 0.7% MDGs line item in the national church budget will likely be made in response to a decision of the Executive Council to eliminate funding for this item.⁵ There is also a resolution filed (A157) acknowledging the effects climate change can have on the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Our diocese has committed its support to the MDGs.
- ***World Mission:*** The Standing Committee on World Mission will present a number of resolutions that acknowledges the renewed focus on the relationships the Church develops and nurtures in

⁵ Seen as a cost-saving measure, the elimination of the budget's line item of 0.7 percent spending for specific Millennium Development Goals spending, drew comment even as it was approved by Executive Council during its meeting to approve the draft budget for 2010-2012. Some worried that eliminating the line item might be seen as The Episcopal Church backing away from its commitment to MDG work. The Episcopal Church actually spends much more than 0.7 percent on MDG-related programs. If this cut survives, budget presentations will likely make clear exactly how much of the spending goes to MDG-related ministries.

the Anglican Communion and its commitment to mission throughout the world. Resolutions of note which require funding are as follows: 1) A128 resolves to reaffirm the role of mission and requests funding for Mission Personnel; 2) A129 proposes world mission orientation in the New Bishop's Conference as well as an annual one day orientation and strategy meeting for Bishops to develop cross-cultural relations with bishops of other Churches in the Anglican Communion; 3) A134 addresses the changing of the name from "Missionary" to "Mission Partner" which recognizes that when we engage in work overseas we are learning just as much from those we encounter as those we are able to teach; 4) A135 seeks to increase the number of seminarian participating in cross-cultural formation; and 5) A136 establishes support for The Episcopal Partnership for Global Mission (EPGM) which draws together a network of experienced, committed and well-positioned mission agencies, parishes, dioceses, seminaries and church-wide offices active in world mission.

The Episcopal Church is involved in several relationships with Anglican provinces and diocese overseas including Brazil, IARAC (Province of Central America), Liberia, Philippines and Mexico. The Standing Commission on World Mission is dedicated to nurturing open communication and sound relationships with Partners. Resolution A130 addresses the covenant, "Commitment to be Companions in Christ," between the Igreja Episcopal Anglicana do Brasil and The Episcopal Church. A131 endorses an event which will be hosted by the Standing Commission on World Mission for all Covenant Committees (IARCA, Liberia, Philippines and Mexico) and the Bi-Lateral

Committee (TEC and Brazil) which is to be held in 2011. A132 provides that reports will be available through an established procedure which will ensure historical information and covenant progress. And, A133 clarifies the mission within The Episcopal Church and the mission outside of the Episcopal Church.

- ***Concerns about Justice, Peace and Human Need:*** While there is a renewed focus on mission, there continues to be a need to express concern for injustices in the world, e.g., in Palestine/Israel, including the need to address the wall around Palestine (A37). There are also resolutions on Cuba and Haiti (A34, A36) and the Philippines and Southern Sudan (A32, A33).

Domestically, resolutions will range from committing resources for prisoner re-entry (A109) to seeking to adopt actions to create an economic justice ministry for and with lower income people (A111, C35). There is also a resolution filed that calls for work against the passage of so-called "Defense of Marriage" state statutes and state constitutional amendments (C23).

- ***Ecumenical Relationships:*** The Convention will have an opportunity to express support for a number of ecumenical relationships, some that have been affirmed at previous conventions, and a new one. One resolution (A72) on an "Interim Eucharistic Sharing Agreement" between The Episcopal Church and the United Methodist Church is commended while another (A73), "Moravian Episcopal Dialogue," recommends full communion between The Episcopal and Moravian Churches. Another resolution (A75) asks to adopt an

Agreement between The Episcopal Church and the Presbyterian Church USA (PCUSA), which has been approved by the 2008 General Assembly of the PCUSA and to authorize a second round of dialogue to address the issues specified in the agreement. And finally, a resolution (A76) proposes to establish 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.

- ***Denominational Health Plan:*** Proposed by the Board of Trustees for the Church Pension Fund, Resolution A177 recommends establishing a Denominational Health Plan for all domestic dioceses, parishes, missions, and other ecclesiastical organizations or bodies, for clergy and lay employees. The plan will be designed and administered by the Trustees and officers of The Church Pension Fund. Each diocese, which currently arranges its own coverage, will have the right to make decisions regarding design options offered by the plan. The proposed plan would provide benefits that are comparable in coverage to those benefits currently provided.

This resolution covers only domestic organizations and bodies, those located in the United States, but includes the foreign Dioceses of Puerto Rico and Virgin Islands. The Church Pension Fund will continue to work with the other foreign dioceses to make recommendations for provision and funding of their healthcare benefits. The implementation of The Denominational Health Plan would be completed as soon as practicable, but no later than the end of 2012.

- ***The Canons of the Church:*** Some revisions of the

Canons (laws) of the Church will be considered, including revision of Canons governing disciplinary action of all members of the clergy (Title IV). The work on the revision of this Canon has stretched over 20 years as dedicated members of a task force have worked through numerous drafts of resolutions seeking passage by successive General Conventions. The 2006 Convention considered a previous draft but it was rejected as it represented a bigger change than circumstances allowed deputies to absorb and accept. (This draft recommended that Title IV include disciplinary standards for lay persons as well as clergy.)

The resolution being presented at this Convention (A185) is limited to members of the clergy and states that “by virtue of Baptism, all members of the Church are called to holiness of life and accountability to one another. The Church and each Diocese shall support their members in their life in Christ and seek to resolve conflicts by promoting healing, repentance, forgiveness, restitution, justice, amendment of life and reconciliation among all involved or affected.”

The importance of this Canon cannot be overstated for every member of the Church. It communicates The Episcopal Church takes seriously its responsibility as an institution that, emerging from our Baptismal covenant, aims to create safe, healthy relationships in a safe, healthy place. As part of this commitment, we hold one another accountable with appropriate consequences. The fact that this revision has taken 20 years to come to fruition speaks to the need and desire to “get it right,” even as there is still work to do. There are additional resolutions supporting A185 which address implementation of these changes.

- **Liturgy:** The General Convention will likely authorize continued use of *Enriching Our Worship*, a collection of supplemental liturgical materials prepared by the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music (A102). Included this year is a resolution (A91) that proposes to direct the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music to collect, develop and disseminate materials that assist members of the Church to address Christian anti-Judaism expressed in and stirred by portions of Christian scriptures and liturgical texts. Actions would include the preparation of a pamphlet explaining Christian anti-Judaism and ways to address it in teaching, evangelism, and congregational life for adults and children. The resolution further directs the Commission to report the results of its efforts to the 77th General Convention.

There is also a resolution (A95) to finally approve and enter into the church calendar the commemorations of several people who had previously been added provisionally, including Harriet Bedell, James Theodore Holly, Oscar Romero and The Martyrs of El Salvador, Tikhon, Vida Dutton Scudder, and Frances Joseph Gaudet. They would also be included in future revisions of *Holy Women, Holy Men: Celebrating the Saints*. There are new resolutions to add other people provisionally to our church's calendar including the Rev. Dr. Pauli Murray, Manteo and Virginia Dare, and the commemoration of Brother William West Skiles.

One other resolution of particular interest to us in the Diocese of North Carolina is a resolution to study for use under the direction of Diocesan

Bishops “An Alternative Baptismal Covenant.” This resolution is being submitted by one of our clergy deputies, the Rev. Lorraine Ljunggren.

The purpose of this alternative is to further empower the baptized members of the Church in living daily the promises made in Holy Baptism by assenting to them in their own voices. In other words, rather than have the celebrant say the “meaty” content of the promises, this alternative asks the whole people of God to claim these promises by saying themselves these powerful words. It is also noteworthy that a question has been added which overtly reminds us of our call to be faithful stewards of the environment.

13. Will General Convention consent to the election of any bishops?

There will be three consents to episcopal elections sought at Convention, Long Island, South Dakota and Central Ecuador.

The normal process following a diocesan election of a bishop is for the Standing Committee of the electing diocese to seek the consent of a majority of bishops with jurisdiction and a majority of diocesan Standing Committees. Only if those consents are obtained may the person elected be ordained bishop. If, however, the election of a bishop is within 120 days of General Convention, then the decision is made by the bishops with jurisdiction in attendance and the House of Deputies.

14. What about the Windsor Report and the Anglican Covenant? What is the status and what may

*happen at General Convention?*⁶

The Windsor Report was published in 2004 to address how the 38 Anglican Provinces relate to one another, particularly in situations in which one or more provinces feel unable to maintain full communion with another part of the Communion. The principal tensions in the Communion in 2004 resulted from the consecration of a non-celibate gay man as Bishop of New Hampshire and the approval of a liturgy for blessing same gender relationships in the Diocese of New Westminster in the Anglican Church of Canada. Concern over those actions prompted some bishops and Archbishops to intervene in other dioceses and provinces, performing episcopal acts, such as ordinations and confirmations, without authority from the diocesan bishop. Some Archbishops also consecrated bishops in the U.S. who then served as bishops of another province from within the U.S.

Among other recommendations, the Windsor Report called for a moratorium on all three actions that generated so much tension in the Communion: (1) consecration of a bishop living in a same gender relationship; (2) authorizing liturgies (Rites) for blessing same gender relationships; and (3) interventions in provinces. The Windsor Report also proposed an Anglican Covenant “to make explicit and forceful the bonds of affection which govern the relationships between the churches of the Anglican Communion.”

In 2006, General Convention adopted Resolution **B033** in response to the Windsor Report. Resolution **B033**

⁶ Josephine H. Hicks, an alternate deputy for the Diocese of North Carolina, is also a member of the Anglican Consultative Council. She contributed this section to the booklet.

called upon "Standing Committees and bishops with jurisdiction to exercise restraint by not consenting to the consecration of any candidate to the episcopate whose manner of life presents a challenge to the wider church and will lead to further strains on communion." General Convention in 2009 will consider resolutions that repeal **B033** and resolutions that allow the development of liturgies for blessing same gender relationships (**C36, C31**).

The 2006 General Convention also expressed its support for the process of developing an Anglican Covenant and directed the International Concerns Committee of the Executive Council and The Episcopal Church's members of the Anglican Consultative Council to follow the development of the Covenant process and report to the 2009 General Convention.

A Covenant Design team has prepared three drafts of an Anglican Covenant since 2007, taking into consideration with each draft comments from the provinces and from individuals and diocesan synods as well as comments at the Lambeth Conference, the gathering of all Anglican bishops, in 2008. The latest draft was published in April 2009 and is available at www.anglicancommunion.org and www.episcopalchurch.org. It will be presented to the Anglican Consultative Council in May 2009. The ACC may or may not commend it to the Provinces for consideration and for a decision on adoption.

The 2009 General Convention will not likely be asked to decide whether to agree to a covenant, regardless of ACC's action. If ACC commends this latest draft to the Provinces, General Convention may decide to commit to a discernment process, engaging with dioceses of The Episcopal Church and listening to voices of other Provinces. If the proposed covenant does not require

constitutional changes, the 2012 General Convention could vote on it. If it requires constitutional changes, two Conventions must consider it, leaving it to the 2015 General Convention for final passage.

15. What is the budget of The Episcopal Church and how is the money spent?

First, just as General Convention is a triennial event, the budget adopted at Convention is for the triennium.

It is not known what the final 2010-2012 budget for The Episcopal Church will be, but discussions this year will be difficult, as they are everywhere, considering the current economic environment. However, a few general statements can be made.

The three categories of funding are:

- ***Program***: These expenses support the mission and ministry of the Church. Each triennium the Convention is asked to declare its priorities, and the following five priorities, considered equally important, are proposed in the draft budget for 2010-2012:
 - Claiming our identity
 - Doing justice and alleviating poverty
 - Growing Congregations
 - Promoting Anglican Partnerships
 - Strengthening governance and foundations for Mission

- ***Canonical***: These expenses cover those costs associated with activities and structures required by the Canons of the Church. They include the expenses of the General Convention, including committees, commissions, agencies and boards; the

stipend of the Presiding Bishop; and the expenses of the President of the House of Deputies.

- ***Corporate***: These expenses provide for the administrative support of the offices of the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society.⁷

The Episcopal Church budget supports mission partners and volunteers around the globe; helps Anglican partner provinces around the world to participate fully in Anglican activities; provides theological education scholarships for Anglican leaders in the Global South; and develops educational materials on world mission.

Through this budget we assist refugees and immigrants. Our ecumenical initiatives are enhanced. Congregational development resources on stewardship, new churches, Hispanic ministries and women's ministries are provided. This budget equips Episcopalians to be faithful voices for justice and peace.

The proposed budget provides “partnership support” to our historically-black Episcopal colleges and to provinces with which we have historic ties such as Mexico, the Philippines, Central America, and Liberia. Domestically, we provide block grants to ministries in Appalachia and with Native Americans, the deaf, the disabled, and people living with HIV/AIDS.

In other words, the budget, once approved, is the Mission Statement for the Church. The Presiding Bishop in her letter introducing the draft budget, along with a similar letter from the President of the House of Deputies are re-printed after Sources at the back of this

⁷The full legal name of the national church corporate body is the *Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America*.

booklet for your consideration.

In 2010-2012, budget proportions are proposed as follows:

Program:	56%
Canonical:	15%
Corporate:	29%

These percentages reflect the re-organization of The Episcopal Church Center started in 2007 which sought to emphasize responsiveness and interconnection between staff while maintaining and honoring mission priorities.

The total proposed budget for the triennium is \$161,800,000.

16. What else goes on at General Convention?

A lot. An exhibit hall presents goods and ideas from a wide variety of organizations and interest groups within the Church. Many church-related organizations choose to hold their meetings in conjunction with the General Convention. Seminaries, provinces, societies, boards and staff offices of the Church hold luncheons and dinners. The triennial meeting of The Episcopal Church Women (ECW) takes place during the Convention. And, as was stated previously, additional worship services are held, often with experimental liturgies. There are children's programs, from basic childcare to sponsored outings and activities. There is also a young adult's festival. You can find the details of these and other activities at the General Convention website listed in the back of this booklet.

17. How can I keep up with what is happening during the General Convention?

Prior to the Convention, you may secure a copy of the *Reports to the 76th General Convention*, more commonly known as the *Blue Book* (which is actually RED this year). It may be downloaded in *pdf* format from the General Convention website. Or it can be ordered in paper from Church Publishing's website. The cost is \$35.00. It can also be ordered from EBAR, Episcopal Books and Resources at their website, or by telephone. (See Sources on page 34.)

The General Convention's website⁸ is filled with all the information about the General Convention. Navigate around the website by following links to the various sites; for example, to read up on the resolutions, click on the Legislation link. Schedule for the Convention is at the "Schedule" link. The General Convention is also committed to being Green. Go to the Convention Information link and click on "The GC goes Green."

During General Convention, there will be numerous news releases from **Episcopal News Service (ENS)** on **Episcopal Life Online**. It's easy to subscribe (or unsubscribe), and it is free. News releases come by e-mail. Go to www.episcopalchurch.org/ens.htm, and click on "Receive Episcopal Life news in your email" at the bottom of the home page, located on the line "ONLINE". News in Spanish is also available.

The **Anglican Communion News Service** will provide some coverage of the Convention. Subscribe to it at the bottom of the subscription page of the Episcopal Life news.

⁸ <http://www.episcopalchurch.org/gc2009.htm>

Information from the Episcopal News Service will be posted on **our diocesan web site**, www.episdionc.org, daily.

Episcopal Life, the print magazine, will have issues focused on General Convention. For information about individual subscriptions, go to, <http://www.episcopal-life.org/>. An annual subscription is \$27.

The independent weekly Episcopal Church magazine, *The Living Church*, has a six-month subscription for \$26. They also offer an online subscription (PDF format), for \$25 for one year. See www.livingchurch.org/ for details.

There are a variety of independent web sites focused on The Episcopal Church. **Anglicans Online** has a news page that links to a wide array of sources and hard data that may be helpful. See www.anglicansonline.org/news/index.html.

The diocese has scheduled an issue of the *NC Disciple*, focused on the Convention, as soon as possible after the Convention adjourns.

Sources

- General Convention website:
<http://www.episcopalchurch.org/gc2009.htm>
- Gregory Straub, “Introduction to General Convention,” on the General Convention website.
- Resolutions: <http://gc2009.org/ViewLegislation/>.
- Draft Budget and Mission Statement of the Executive Council to the 76th General Convention of TEC
<http://www.episcopalchurch.org/documents/BudgetDRAFTFinalEditnkb0313092.pdf>
- Deputy lists and statistics
newark.rutgers.edu/~lcrew/gc.html
- *The Blue Book: Reports to the 76th General Convention*
 - *pdf* version:
<http://www.episcopalchurch.org/gc2009.htm>.
Follow the link to publications.
 - Hard Copy, from Church Publishing (\$35.00):
<http://www.churchpublishing.org/products/index.cfm?fuseaction=productCategory&categoryID=181>.
 - Or: Episcopal Books and Resources (EBaR)
<http://www.episcopalbookstore.org/wc.dll?main~bd> Telephone: (800) 903-5544.
- A series of news releases from the Episcopal News Service.
www.episcopalchurch.org/3577_4477_ENG_HTM.

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDING BISHOP

Fellow members of the Body of Christ:

I commend this Budget to you, a budget which represents the priorities for mission proposed by the Executive Council. It offers our hopes and dreams for mission in several fields: in the domestic (United States) part of The Episcopal Church, in the non-domestic dioceses of The Episcopal Church, with our Covenant partners (Brazil, IARCA, Mexico, Philippines, and Liberia), and other parts of the Anglican Communion, as well as with ecumenical partners. Together, we dream of healing this world God has made, and helping to build and nurture communities which look more like the Reign of God.

This Convention's theme of *Ubuntu* is a constant reminder that the Body of Christ has many parts, all interlinked and interdependent, and that together we will not grow up into the full stature of Christ until we understand ourselves and live as though we are truly one. The salvation of each of us depends on the salvation of all of us. We continue to work to honor the dignity of every person, through international peace and justice work centered on the MDGs, and we have added a broader focus to our concern with poverty, centered on the poorest in the United States. When Jesus reminded his hearers that salvation depends on caring for the least (Matthew 25:34-40), he meant those both near and far away. We cannot be deeply engaged in God's mission without attention to poverty in both domestic and international contexts.

Nor can we be deeply engaged in God's mission without finding new and creative ways to share the good news we know in Jesus Christ with groups and populations who are hungry to hear it. You will find in

this mission budget initiatives designed to do that through multicultural evangelism, work with youth and young adults, building new kinds of faith communities, mobilizing new resources, and speaking and teaching about our faith and what it means to be an Episcopalian. Look for budget lines dealing with evangelism, church planting, emergent church, young people, mission funding, and communications.

This Budget has constraints, largely due to the current global economic situation. We have trimmed where we could and yet continued to insist that there are particular kinds of mission which only the whole Church can do most effectively. As we have made challenging decisions in preparing this Budget, we have attempted to abide by the principle that some kinds of mission work are more effectively done by smaller communities within the church—congregations and dioceses. This Budget represents those mission initiatives we believe need the gifts and gravitas of the whole of The Episcopal Church. Our challenge is to learn how to do the business of the church more efficiently, so that resources may be set free for the larger vision of God’s mission as healing the world.

Jesus said, “I came that they might have life and have it abundantly” (John 10:10). He meant it for all people. May our work at General Convention help us to make that reality possible for more of our sisters and brothers, all God’s children.

The Most Reverend Katharine Jefferts Schori

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE HOUSE OF DEPUTIES

“For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also...” Matthew 6:21

Holy people of God:

Creating a budget is not new work for most of us. We make budgets for our personal and family lives. We serve on vestries and church committees, as well as diocesan and provincial committees, where we prepare budgets to reflect the priorities of our hopes and dreams. Budget making is a task that can be exciting and very difficult at the same time. Budgets show us how much money we have to do the things we need and want to do. Most importantly, our budgets are living responses to what we believe God is calling us to do.

The Draft Budget is the result of the diligent and prayerful work of the staff and the Executive Council. The Draft Budget presented here is a “work in progress.” The deputies and bishops of the 76th General Convention will build upon the work already done.

Broadening the work on this Draft Budget, it is now the responsibility of the General Convention, with the able work of General Convention’s Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget and Finance (PB&F), to listen to the hopes and dreams of the General Convention through hearings, legislation, conversation and prayer. It is our responsibility to develop the final budget for the mission and ministry. On the 8th legislative day, the Budget will be presented to the General Convention. On the 9th legislative day, the Budget for The Episcopal Church will come before each House of General Convention for consideration and vote.

It is our responsibility to read carefully and understand the Draft Budget, to attend and participate in the open budget hearings hosted by PB&F, listening carefully to what God is calling us to do. As stewards of God's abundant gifts to us, we pray that the Budget for The Episcopal Church adopted by this General Convention will reflect our faithful response to God's call to us.

At the 76th General Convention, inspired by the convention theme of *Ubuntu*, we will talk about, think about, and pray about getting just the right balance between mission and the infrastructure needed to support the mission. We will talk, pray and think about our baptismal call to love our neighbors as ourselves. The Budget for The Episcopal Church should reflect the love of Christ and our response to God's call to us based upon the reality of what God has so generously given us.

When we have completed our work and approved a mission budget for the next triennium, let us pray that our efforts have been guided by the Holy Spirit and that the Budget for The Episcopal Church is a faithful response to God's call to us and a glimpse into the heart of The Episcopal Church.

Bonnie Anderson, D.D.
President, The House of Deputies

*God, Grant your blessing on all
who join in this General Convention.
By your Spirit give them grace
to listen and grace to speak.
Help them to discover
where you are leading this church.
Give us all a unity in mission
that will enable the church
by its life and witness
to fulfill the ministry you have
entrusted to us,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

adapted from the Anglican Fellowship of Prayer