

Resolution Expressing the Mind of the House of Bishops

Adopted Unanimously on Thursday, July 2, 2015

“Communion Across Difference”

We the House of Bishops of The Episcopal Church wish to express our love and appreciation to our colleagues who identify as Communion Partners and those bishops who have affinity with the Communion Partners’ position as stated in their “Communion Partners Salt Lake City Statement.” Our time together in Salt Lake City, in conversation and in prayer, has demonstrated how profoundly the love of God in Jesus binds us together and empowers us for service to God’s mission. As we have waited upon the leading of the Holy Spirit in our deliberations, we have been reminded that the House of Bishops is richly gifted with many voices and perspectives on matters of theological, liturgical, and pastoral significance. This has been shown in our discernment with respect to doctrinal matters relative to Christian marriage. We thank God for the rich variety of voices in our House, in our dioceses, in The Episcopal Church, and in the Anglican Communion, that reflect the wideness of God’s mercy and presence in the Church and in the world.

We give particular thanks for the steadfast witness of our colleagues in the Communion Partners. We value and rely on their commitment to The Episcopal Church and the Anglican Communion. We recognize that theirs is a minority voice in the House of Bishops in our deliberations with respect to Christian marriage; and

we affirm that they are an indispensable part of who we are as the House of Bishops of the Episcopal Church. Our church needs their witness. Further, we appreciate that each of us will return to dioceses where there will be a variety of responses to Resolutions A054 and A036. The equanimity, generosity, and graciousness with which the Communion Partners have shared their views on Christian marriage and remain in relationship is a model for us and for the lay and ordained leaders in our dioceses to follow. We thank God that in the fullness of the Holy Trinity we can and must remain together as the Body of Christ in our dioceses, in the Episcopal Church, and in our relationships with sisters and brothers in Christ in the Anglican Communion. The bonds created in baptism are indeed indissoluble and we pray that we have the confidence to rely upon the Holy Spirit who will continue to hold us all together as partners in communion through the love of God in Jesus.