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Resolution #1
A Resolution for Funding of The Chaplaincies at The HBCU’s

Prepared by Joe McDaniel, Jr.

Resolved, the House ____________ concurring, That this 80th General Convention request that the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget and Finance allocate $300,000 from The Episcopal Church triennium budget appropriation for the funding of the Chaplaincies at Saint Augustine and Voorhees Colleges; and be it further

Resolved, That such monies shall be divided evenly between the Chaplaincies of Saint Augustine and Voorhees College to be utilized exclusively to fund the ministries of the Chaplaincies, and other such activities that promote the purposes of this resolution; and be it further

Resolved, That this General Convention directs, consistent with established policies and procedures, that The Executive Council shall direct that the appropriate offices of The TEC and their Officers with oversight of this allocation to the Chaplaincies and such offices and Officers shall report back to the General Convention in 2024 on the usage of the $300,000 allocation.

Explanation:

There is a long relationship between both Saint Augustine’s University and Voorhees College and The Episcopal Church, a partnership that endures today.

As each HBCU’s moved into the new millennium, it renewed its historical partnership with The Episcopal Church. The Church alone cannot fulfill the commission without the help of Christian institutions of learning. Conversely, Saint Augustine University and Voorhees College cannot, without the help of the
Church, provide effective teaching and learning that helps its learners to proclaim that the Rule of God is at hand, to select careers that nourish people for the riches of His grace and to Glorify God in this life and in the life to come.

It is no secret that two remaining Episcopal Related HBCU’s have been through a rocky time financially over the last few years. However, through effective oversight and working with The Episcopal Church, Executive Council Committee on HBCU these HBCUs have staged a remarkable turnaround -in their financial management. However, the Chaplaincies are still in need of dire financial assistance to continue to serve their core mission. The Chaplains of these two HBCU are not afforded clergy pension contributions from their respective institutions and are not supported for participation in The Episcopal Church Medical Trust. Budget appropriations support by this resolution will provide for General Convention mandated clergy participation in The Episcopal Church pension fund and medical trust plans.

Each of the Chaplaincies strives to be a welcoming and safe place for their students and the community. Services of Holy Eucharist are held on Sundays during the academic year, where visitors hear the Word of God and partake of the sacraments.

As Episcopal Chaplaincies, each recognizes that students bring the gifts of a diversity of beliefs, experiences and talents, and they treasure this diversity. Each strives to be an inclusive and welcoming community, embracing a diversity of cultures and united through the unconditional love of Jesus Christ. The university chapel programs and religious life at Saint Augustine’s University and Voorhees College are both places to study, pray, and worship together, deepening their student’s faith so that they may be transforming agents sent forth to serve God in the world.
Resolution #2
A Resolution to promote equity and to Reduce differences in Health Outcomes

Prepared by Joe McDaniel, Jr.

Resolved, the House of _________________ concurring, that this 80th General Convention of The Episcopal Church hereby directs and encourages that Congress adopt the following package of policies that would serve to promote equity and to reduce differences in health outcomes: address implicit bias and unconscious bias; address data challenges; address Social Determinants Of Health; and invest in professional diversity; and be it further

Resolved, that this 80th General Convention directs, consistent with established policies and procedures, that the Executive Council refer this Resolution to the Office of Governmental Relations, so that it may take all actions necessary to accomplish the intentions and purposes of this Resolution.

Explanation:

The need for the nation to move forward on improving health equity is demonstrated by the disproportionate impact certain diseases has had on racial and ethnic minoritized communities.
• Black Americans are dying at nearly two times their national population share, and in five out of the six counties with the highest COVID-19 death rates, they are the largest racial group, according to the COVID Racial Data Tracker.

• The Latinx community accounts for 49% of Virginia’s COVID-19 cases where ethnicity is known despite accounting for only 10% of the state’s population. Similarly, in Iowa and Wisconsin, the COVID-19 infection rate for Latinx individuals is five times their population share.

• American Indian/Alaska Natives are also disproportionately affected, and American Indians account for 60% of COVID-19 cases in New Mexico where they are only 9% of the state’s population, and 21% of COVID-19 deaths in Arizona where they are just 4% of the population.

The testimony cites three key factors why Communities of color are at higher risk for COVID-19:

• Structural inequities and social determinants of health (SDOH) that are influenced by bias and racial discrimination. Essential non-health care jobs, such as bus drivers, train operators and custodians, are overrepresented by communities of color.

• Pre-existing conditions, such as diabetes, hypertension and obesity are disproportionately higher among African Americans, in large part due to generations of food insecurity, lack of access to comprehensive medical care, and lack of access to safe green spaces for exercise and play.

• “Additional SDOH considerations have also contributed to the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on marginalized and minoritized communities, including poverty, lack of access to health care, nutritious food, affordable housing, and accessible transportation, as well as congregate living with multi-generational family members and the fact that many people of color work ‘essential’ jobs that increase their exposure to the virus, such as in meatpacking plants, warehouses, supermarkets, hospitals, and nursing homes,” states the AMA testimony.
More than 28% of people diagnosed with COVID-19 in the U.S. are Hispanic, but the effect of COVID-19 on this community has not been widely addressed, the testimony states, quoting Aletha Maybank, MD, MPH, chief health equity officer and group vice president of the AMA.

Citing the World Health Organization, the AMA told Congress that avoidable health inequities are produced and do not have to exist.

To promote equity and to reduce differences in health outcomes, Congress should adopt the following policies:
Address implicit bias and unconscious bias. These biases are learned stereotypes that are automatic, unintentional, deeply engrained, universal, and able to influence behavior. Demonstrated impacts of these biases include disproportionate mortality among pregnant Black women. Moreover, shifting only evaluating individual levels of bias to also incorporating structural transformations that apply an equity lens in all medical practices, policies, and organizational performance metrics is imperative.

Address data challenges. Without improvements in data collection at all levels of government, it is difficult to know where virus “hot-spots” are occurring, and where testing and other resources need to be focused. H.R. 6585, the “Equitable Data Collection and Disclosure on COVID-19 Act of 2020,” which would require the Health and Human Services Department to collect and report racial, ethnic, and other demographic data on COVID-19 testing, treatment, and fatality rates.

Address SDOH. Social risk factors, such as lack of access to health care, nutritious food, affordable housing, and accessible transportation, must be addressed beyond just the parameters of the pandemic. H.R. 4004, the “Social Determinants of Health Accelerator Act,” which is aimed at providing local communities with the funding and planning tools to implement solutions to the SDOH.
Resolution #2 (cont.)

Invest in professional diversity. There is a need to expand the pipeline of racially and ethnically diverse, practicing physicians. This need extends to medical school, residency, and physicians in teaching and academic settings.

It will take all of us working in partnership to build and continue on a path forward to address not only the specific health disparities that the COVID-19 pandemic has revealed, but also the underlying structural and institutional racism and SDOH and to advance health equity.
Resolution #3
Resolution for The Creation of a Clergy Retirement Contribution Fund

Prepared by Joe McDaniel, Jr.

Resolved, that the House of ________________________ concurring that the 80th General Convention of The Episcopal Church directs the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the Protestant Episcopal Church (the “Episcopal Church”) to conduct a study to determine if it is possible to establish a permanent Retirement Contribution Fund (the “Fund”) whereby the applicable pension contributions will be made from such fund to pay the pension contributions of a parish priest’s salary who would serve such parish but for the fact that the required pension contributions makes it unaffordable for the hiring of such priest; and be it further

Resolved that no priest may be eligible to participate in receiving pension contributions from the Fund where his\her parish’s gross income exceeds $250,000; and be it further

Resolved, that the study shall include discussions with dioceses to determine the feasibility of a diocese’s ability to contribute a meaningful percentage to the Fund to support a priest’s pension contribution; and be it further

Resolved, that The Church Pension Fund also be included in the discussions because of the financial expertise it would bring to the table in the management of pension contributions; and be it further

Resolved, that the Officers of the Episcopal Church and Executive Council shall refer this resolution to the appropriate Interim Body for consideration; and be it further

Resolved, that The Episcopal Church shall report to the 81st General Convention on the progress that it has made during the triennium in its efforts to effectuate the purposes of this resolution.
Explanation:

The Church Pension Fund's founding motto, at its creation in 1917, in was to create a pension fund that would enable clergy to retire with dignity. Since its inception, its investment strategy has been excellent, with returns consistently ahead of the benchmarks established by the Board of Trustees for evaluating its investment program. In fact, as of the writing of this resolution, the Church Pension Fund has paid out $6.8 Billion to clergy and dependents since its inception in 1917. Yet, today the Church Pension Fund has some $13.5 Billion Dollars under its management. Of this amount, it receives some $100 Million Dollars annually that are paid in as pension retirement contribution, and it pays out $400 Million in annual benefits. While it is clear that the Church Pension Fund must maintain sufficient liquidity and assets to pay its pension and other benefit plan obligations, it is also clear the fund operates with excess revenues.

While it may not be possible to direct the Church Pension Fund to establish the Fund because of the laws governing pension contributions, such a discussion is necessary to ensure that all priests retire with dignity. It is therefore necessary to determine the means by which the Fund can be created to fund the pension contributions of a parish priest’s salary who would serve such parish but for the fact that the required pension contributions makes it unaffordable to prevent that parish from the hiring of such priest.

Such parishes that are impacted by the unaffordability of a parish priest, as a result of the pension contributions, are predominately African American Inner-City Parishes, thereby rendering them unsustainable as membership declines as a result of the lack of a priest. Such funding of the purposes of this resolution would live into The Episcopal Church’s embrace of its commitment to the establishment of The Beloved Community.
Resolution #4
A Resolution for Continued Funding of The Beloved Community

Prepared by Joe McDaniel, Jr.

Resolved, the House ____________ concurring, That this 80th General Convention request that the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget and Finance allocate $2.0 million for the triennium for the continued implementation of additional work of organizing our efforts to respond to racial injustice and grow a Beloved Community of healers, justice makers and reconcilers for the implementation of this resolution; and be it further

Resolved, That such monies shall again be utilized exclusively to make grants to agencies and dioceses and other affiliated entities of The Episcopal Church for the establishment of such programmatic activities aimed at addressing the issue of Racial Reconciliation. Such activities may include, but not be limited to, speaker series, sacred conversations, Racial Reconciliation Workshops, and other activities that promote the purposes of this resolution; and be it further

Resolved, That this General Convention directs, consistent with established policies and procedures, that The Executive Council shall again be charged with the establishment of all criteria, and procedures associated with the awarding of such grants, and that such criteria and procedures be established as soon as practical, after the conclusion of this 80th General Convention such Committee or Office that Executive Council shall designate with implementation of the grants shall have published the criteria and be ready to accept applications submitted for such grants, and that the entities receiving such grants shall report back to the Committee or Office that Executive Council shall have designated on the usage of its grant, and that the Executive Council shall report back to the General Convention in 2024 on the usage of the $2.0 million allocation.
Resolution #4 (cont.)

Explanation:

The 78th General Convention of The Episcopal Church recognized, by the adoption of Resolution 2015-C019, that, despite repeated efforts at anti-racism training as well as racial justice and racial reconciliation initiatives—including the passage of more than 30 General Convention resolutions dating back to 1952, that the abomination and sin of racism continues to plague our society and our Church at great cost to human life and human dignity.

And, in the wake of the brutal, overtly racist murders of nine of our Christian brothers and sisters of Mother Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church on June 17, 2015; numerous inexcusable deaths of unarmed black men and youth at the hands of law enforcement personnel; and the moral atrocity of mass incarceration in which a hugely disproportionate number of persons of color have been unfairly caught in the net of an unjust criminal justice system, the 78th General Convention established as a top priority of The Episcopal Church in the upcoming triennium the challenging and difficult work of racial reconciliation through prayer, teaching, engagement, and action.

2015-C019 charged the Presiding Bishop, President of the House of Deputies, Vice President of the House of Bishops, and Vice President of the House of Deputies to lead, direct, and be present to assure and account for the Church’s work of racial justice and reconciliation. They articulated a framework for that work, entitled Becoming Beloved Community: The Episcopal Church’s Long-term Commitment to Racial Healing, Reconciliation and Justice, which directs additional work in the area of racial reconciliation.

As we head into this next triennium, we are faced with the realities of a resurgence of white supremacy, the increased normalization of personal and institutionalized fear of people of color, and overtly dehumanizing policies being
enacted on refugees and immigrants—in addition to all of the injustices that prompted the 78th General Convention to pass 2015-C019.

As the 79th General Convention did by the adoption of Resolution D002, which allocated $750,000 for the purposes herein, we again call upon our Church to make an investment of significant resources to hone in on and build capacity among our current and future leaders within The Episcopal Church in order to impact the practices of telling the truth, repairing the breach, practicing Jesus’ way of love, and proclaiming the dream of Beloved Community.

In order to continue to make our commitment to Becoming Beloved Community a reality in a world that desperately needs it, local churches, dioceses, and agencies must continue to have the resources to engage this work in their contexts. We believe that these grants will continue to make it possible for churches, dioceses, and other agencies of The Episcopal Church to continue to live into the commitment of the Church to Becoming Beloved Community in new and life-giving ways. In the same way that communities of practice have developed from the Genesis Church Planting grants that were given in the 2015-2018 triennium, Resolution D002 made it possible for a network of grant recipients to share best practices, resources, etc. among themselves and with the whole church. Provinces and dioceses that have been unable to afford to provide the canonically mandated trainings have been able to do so. These grants have also made it possible for the development of much-needed culturally appropriate and relevant resources that have been broadly shared with the church through the Absalom Jones Center for Racial Healing.
Resolution #5
A Resolution for Funding of the Implementation of The Internalized Oppression Curriculum

Prepared by Joe McDaniel, Jr.

Resolved, the House ______________ concurring, That this 80th General Convention request that the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget and Finance allocate $73,800 for the triennium for the implementation of The Internalized Oppression Curriculum, Healing From Internalized Oppression; and be it further

Resolved, That such monies shall be utilized exclusively to make presentations to agencies and dioceses and other affiliated entities of The Episcopal Church, and other such activities that promote the purposes of this resolution; and be it further

Resolved, That this General Convention directs, consistent with established policies and procedures, that The Executive Council shall direct that the Office of Black Ministries be charged with the establishment of all criteria, and procedures associated with implementation of the Curriculum, and that the Office of Black Ministries shall report back to the General Convention in 2024 on the usage of the $73,800 allocation.

Explanation:

When people are targeted, discriminated against, or oppressed over a period of time, they often internalize (believe and make part of their self-image – their internal view of themselves) the myths and misinformation that society communicates to them about their group. Exploited low-income workers might internalize the ideas that they can’t do any other kind of work, that their lives were meant to be as they are, and that they’re worth less than people with wealth or education. Women might internalize the stereotype that they are not
good at math and science, or people of color might internalize the myth that they are not good workers.

When people from targeted groups internalize myths and misinformation, it can cause them to feel (often unconsciously) that in some way they are inherently not as worthy, capable, intelligent, beautiful, good, etc. as people outside their group. They turn the experience of oppression or discrimination inward. They begin to feel that the stereotypes and misinformation that society communicates are true and they act as if they were true. This is called internalized oppression.

Internalized oppression affects many groups of people: women, people of color, poor and working class people, people with disabilities, young people, elders, Jews, Catholics, immigrants, gays, and many other groups, including members of the Church.

There are two ways that internalized oppression functions:

Internalized oppression operates on an individual basis. A person believes that the stereotypes and misinformation that s/he hears are true about herself/himself. S/he holds herself/himself back from living life to her/his full potential or s/he acts in ways that reinforce the stereotypes and are ultimately self-defeating. This may prevent her/him from running for the Vestry and seeking other positions of leadership in the Church.

Internalized oppression occurs among members of the same cultural group. People in the same group believe (often unconsciously) the misinformation and stereotypes that society communicates about other members of their group. People turn the oppression on one another, instead of addressing larger problems in society. The results are that people treat one another in ways that are less than
fully respectful. Often people from the same cultural group hurt, undermine, criticize, mistrust, fight with, or isolate themselves from one another.

Examples of internalized oppression as it occurs in individuals:

Women, low-income people, and people of color don't speak up as much in meetings because they don't think their contribution will be important or "correct". Often participants from these groups may have insight into how to solve a problem, but they hold back from sharing it.

In response to low expectations and lack of encouragement, some teenagers from oppressed groups believe that they won't succeed; consequently, they give up on learning and pursuing their dreams. This prevents them from pursuing educational opportunities and thus prevents them from attending seminary and becoming members of The Episcopal Clergy. This serves to defeat our goal of achieving equitable representation among The Church’s Ordained order.

A person who is not able get a job with decent wages may try to cope with his/her disappointment with drugs like alcohol.

As you can see, internalized oppression can have serious consequences for communities and The Church. It holds people back from thinking well of themselves, from living full lives, and from standing up against injustice. It can be the source of physical or mental illness and self-destructive behavior. Internalized oppression can serve to divide people within the same group, so they are not as effective in supporting each other and standing together for change. It can also cause people to be suspicious of those outside their own group, making it difficult to build alliances.
Resolution #6
Resolution Establishing Equity in The Awarding of TEC Grants

Prepared by Joe McDaniel, Jr.

Resolved, that the House of __________________________ concurring that the 80th General Convention of The Episcopal Church directs that 25% percent of the grants that are annually awarded by The Episcopal Church be set aside and awarded to congregations or organizations that are predominately made up of people of color; and be it further

Resolved, that all TEC Grants shall be communicated in a timely manner and through an appropriate medium to ensure that grant availability, criteria, and timelines reach the appropriate audiences; and be it further

Resolved, that all grant reviewers shall have taken TEC’s anti-racism training; and be it further

Resolved, that grant criteria that may create hardships for congregations that are struggling financially or who lack partners be eliminated; and be it further

Resolved, that grant-writing resources and other relevant expertise be made available when requested by a potential grant applicant; and be it further

Resolved, that each office of TEC which makes such annual grants shall report to each successive General Convention on its progress in the effectuation of this resolution’s purposes, specifically a report detailing a breakdown of the dollar amounts of grants awarded to congregations or organizations of color versus those awarded to majority congregations or organization shall be provided.
Explanation:

The Episcopal Church annually awards nearly $10 Million in grants and scholarships from budgetary lines and from trusts that it manages. Included among these are Beloved Community Grants, Block Grants, Constable Grants, Conan Fund Grants, Educational Enterprise Grants, Evangelism Grants, Jubilee Ministry Grants, to name a few. Yet few of these awards are made to congregations or organizations that are controlled by people of color. For example, during the first round of funding for The Beloved Community Grants, while $350,000 was the total dollar amount awarded, only $24,000 was awarded to an organization controlled by people of color. This amount represents just 7.0% of the total dollar awarded.

Accordingly, pursuant to the gospel of reconciliation and commitment to have a just and humane society dictates that the TEC can do better in ensuring that all organizations begin playing on a level field.

This level field can be achieved if the availability of such grants is communicated in a timely manner and through an appropriate medium to ensure that grant availability, criteria, and timelines reach the appropriate audiences.

Additionally, to counter any implicit biases on the part of the grant reviewers, all grant reviewers shall have taken TEC’s anti-racism training.

Furthermore, grant criteria that may create hardships for congregations who are struggling financially or who lack partners be eliminated. For example, such struggling congregations may not have additional funding sources and partners. Yet, the lack of these factors may count against the scoring of their grant application.

Lastly, many struggling African American Churches do not have resources to assist them in putting together a grant application. Therefore, grant-writing resources and other relevant expertise should be made available when requested by a potential grant applicant.
Resolution #7
A Resolution to Address The Issue of Voter Suppression

Prepared by Joe McDaniel, Jr.

Resolved, the House of ___________________________ concurring, That this 80th General Convention of The Episcopal Church hereby again directs and encourages the adoption, on a state-by-state basis, the following package of reforms that would expand voter registration, increase voter eligibility, and make voting processes more accessible by: implementing automatic voter registration; enabling same-day voter registration; preparing for natural disasters; allowing online registration; expanding the circle of people who are eligible to vote; making it easier to vote by mail; enabling no-excuse absentee voting; creating long-term mailing lists for absentee voters; making it easier for people to vote early, in person; enabling weekend voting and extended hours; and, guaranteeing an adequate number of voting locations; and be it further

Resolved, that this 80th General Convention calls for the elimination of all statewide Voter ID legislation that has been adopted since the 2013 Supreme Court Shelby Case; and be it further

Resolved, That this 80th General Convention directs, consistent with established policies and procedures, that the Executive Council refer this Resolution to the Office of Governmental Relations, so that it may take all actions necessary to accomplish the intentions and purposes of this Resolution.

Explanation:

In the United States, elections are administered locally, and forms of voter suppression vary among jurisdictions. At the founding of the country, the right to vote in most states was limited to property-owning white males. Over time, the
right to vote was formally granted to racial minorities, women, and youth. During the later 19th and early 20th centuries, Southern states passed Jim Crow laws to suppress poor and racial minority voters – such laws included poll taxes, literacy tests, and grandfather clauses. Most of these voter suppression tactics were made illegal after the enactment of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. In 2013, discriminatory voter ID laws arose following the Supreme Court's decision to strike down Section 4 of the Voting Rights Act, which some argue amount to voter suppression among African Americans.

In Texas, a voter ID law requiring a driver's license, passport, military identification, or gun permit, was repeatedly found to be intentionally discriminatory. The state's election laws could be put back under the control of the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ). Under a previous Attorney General, Jeff Sessions, however, the DOJ expressed support for Texas's ID law. Sessions was accused by Coretta Scott King in 1986 of trying to suppress the black vote. A similar ID law in North Dakota, which would have disenfranchised large numbers of Native Americans, was also overturned.

In Wisconsin, a federal judge found that the state's restrictive voter ID law led to "real incidents of disenfranchisement, which undermine rather than enhance confidence in elections, particularly in minority communities"; and, given that there was no evidence of widespread voter impersonation in Wisconsin, found that the law was "a cure worse than the disease." In addition to imposing strict voter ID requirements, the law cut back on early voting, required people to live in a ward for at least 28 days before voting, and prohibited emailing absentee ballots to voters.

Other controversial measures include shutting down Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) offices in minority neighborhoods, making it more difficult for residents to obtain voter IDs; shutting down polling places in minority
neighborhoods; systematically depriving precincts in minority neighborhoods of the resources they need to operate efficiently, such as poll workers and voting machines; and purging voters from the rolls shortly before an election. Often, voter fraud is cited as a justification for such laws even when the incidence of voter fraud is low. In Iowa, lawmakers passed a strict voter ID law with the potential to disenfranchise 260,000 voters. Out of 1.6 million votes cast in Iowa in 2016, there were only 10 allegations of voter fraud; none were cases of impersonation that a voter ID law could have prevented. Iowa Secretary of State Paul Pate, the architect of the bill, admitted, "We've not experienced widespread voter fraud in Iowa."

In May 2017, President Donald Trump established the Presidential Advisory Commission on Election Integrity, purportedly for the purpose of preventing voter fraud. Critics have suggested its true purpose was voter suppression. The commission was led by Kansas secretary of state Kris Kobach, a staunch advocate of strict voter ID laws and a proponent of the Crosscheck system. Crosscheck is a national database designed to check for voters who are registered in more than one state by comparing names and dates of birth. Researchers at Stanford University, the University of Pennsylvania, Harvard University, and Microsoft found that for every legitimate instance of double registration it finds, Crosscheck's algorithm returns approximately 200 false positives. Kobach has been repeatedly sued by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) for trying to restrict voting rights in Kansas.
Resolution #8
Resolution to Address the Issue of Mass Incarceration

Prepared by Joe McDaniel, Jr.

Resolved, the House of ________________ concurring, That this 80th General Convention of The Episcopal Church (TEC) urges Congress and the states: (i). to eliminate incarceration for lower-level crimes; (ii). to pass legislation that would make default prison sentences — which are often excessively long — proportional to the specific crimes committed; and (iii) to use the power of their purses to encourage these changes; and be it further

Resolved, That the 80th General Convention of TEC again urges Congress to initiate studies to examine racial and gender disparities in sentencing, including racial and gender disparities in prosecutors’ exercise of discretion in seeking sentencing enhancements under three-strikes, Section 851 federal drug enhancements, and other habitual offender laws and disparate racial and gender effects of drug policies such as mandatory minimum sentences and school zone drug enhancements; and be it further

Resolved, That the 80th General Convention again urges state and federal governments to adopt legislation whereby all arrests and/or convictions for non-violent summary or misdemeanor offenses committed more than ten years ago are automatically sealed from access by prospective employers, landlords, and all others except law enforcement, noting that the young and people of color are disproportionately affected by this form of discrimination; and be it further

Resolved, That this 80th General Convention directs, consistent with established policies and procedures, that the Executive Council refer this Resolution to the Office of Governmental Relations, so that it may take all actions necessary to accomplish the intentions and purposes of this Resolution.
Explanation:

For years, Congress had attempted to pass criminal justice reform legislation, such as the Sentencing Reform and Corrections Act (SRCA) introduced in 2015 by Senators Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa) and Dick Durbin (D-Ill.). But the SRCA failed to pass in 2016 despite overwhelming bipartisan support, thanks to opposition from Sen. Tom Cotton (R-Ark.) and then-Senator Jeff Sessions (R-Ala.).

That all changed in December of 2018 when the Senate finally passed, and President Trump signed, the FIRST STEP Act — a modest bill that, despite some initial setbacks, includes key parts of the SRCA. That makes it the first major reduction to federal drug sentences.

The FIRST STEP Act is consequential because it includes provisions for meaningful sentencing reform, which would reduce the number and amount of people in prison and is part of the starting point of any serious legislation for criminal justice reform. Sentencing laws played a central role in the rise of mass incarceration in recent decades. The federal prison population, in particular, has risen by more than 700 percent since 1980, and federal prison spending has increased by nearly 600 percent. That growth has disproportionately affected African Americans, Native Americans, and Latinos.

Federal mandatory minimum sentences were a catalyst for the recent surge of unnecessarily harsh prison sentences. More than two-thirds of federal prisoners serving a life sentence or a virtual life sentence have been convicted of non-violent crimes.

But research continues to show that long prison sentences are often ineffective. One study found that overly harsh sentences have done little to reduce crime. In fact, in some cases, longer prison stays can actually increase the likelihood of
people returning to criminal activity. These sentences disproportionately impact people of color and low-income communities.

The FIRST STEP Act shortens mandatory minimum sentences for nonviolent drug offenses. It also eases a federal “three strikes” rule — which currently imposes a life sentence for three or more convictions — and issues a 25-year sentence instead. Most consequentially, it expands the “drug safety-valve,” which would give judges more discretion to deviate from mandatory minimums when sentencing for nonviolent drug offenses.

In an overdue change, the bill also makes the Fair Sentencing Act retroactive. Passed in 2010, the Fair Sentencing Act has helped reduce the sentencing disparity between crack and powder cocaine offenses — a disparity that has hurt racial minorities. The FIRST STEP Act will now apply the Fair Sentencing Act to 3,000 people who were convicted of crack offenses before the law went into effect.

Beyond sentencing reform, the FIRST STEP Act includes provisions that will improve conditions for current prisoners and address several laws that increased racial disparities in the federal prison system. The bill will require federal prisons to offer programs to reduce recidivism; ban the shackling of pregnant women; and expand the cap on “good time credit” — or small sentence reductions based on good behavior — from around 47 to 54 days per year. That “good time” amendment will benefit as many 85 percent of federal prisoners.

The FIRST STEP Act changes the conversation on mass incarceration

The FIRST STEP Act is a critical win in the fight to reduce mass incarceration. While the bill is hardly a panacea, it’s the largest step the federal government has taken to reduce the number of people in federal custody. (The federal government
remains the nation’s leading incarcerator, and more people are under the custody of the federal Bureau of Prisons than any single state system.)

The FIRST STEP Act marks progress for criminal justice reform, but it has some notable shortcomings. It will leave significant mandatory minimum sentences in place. In addition, two of the bill’s key sentencing provisions are not retroactive, which minimizes their overall impact.

One step is to eliminate incarceration for lower-level crimes, such as minor marijuana trafficking and immigration crimes. The default sentences for those crimes should be alternatives to incarceration, such as treatment, community service, or probation. Second, lawmakers should also pass legislation that would make default prison sentences — which are often excessively long — proportional to the specific crimes committed. If Congress and every state enacted this pair of reforms, the national prison population would be safely reduced by 40 percent. Third, Congress can use the power of the purse to encourage these changes. Washington spends a significant amount of money supporting state criminal justice systems: Those dollars could be used to reward policies that reduce rather than entrench mass incarceration.

Ultimately, the FIRST STEP Act is one step in the right direction for reducing mass incarceration in the United States. It has elevated criminal justice reform as a rare space for bipartisan consensus and cooperation in a fractured national political environment. With an awareness of that consensus, we should push for the bigger next steps that will move us toward ending mass incarceration.
Resolution #9
Resolution to Address The Issue of Private Prisons

Prepared by Joe McDaniel, Jr.

Resolved, the House of ________________________ concurring, That this 80th General Convention of The Episcopal Church hereby directs and encourages the adoption, as appropriate, on a state-by-state basis and at the national level a moratorium on the construction of private prisons, and for their outright abolition; and be it further

Resolved, That this 80th General Convention directs, consistent with established policies and procedures, that the Executive Council refer this Resolution to the Office of Governmental Relations, so that it may take all actions necessary to accomplish the intentions and purposes of this Resolution.

Explanation:

The Federal Bureau of Prisons announced its intent to end for-profit prison contracts:

Terminating federal contracts. On August 18, 2016, Deputy U.S. Attorney General Sally Yates announced that the Justice Department intended to end its Bureau of Prisons contracts with for-profit prison operators, because it concluded "...the facilities are both less safe and less effective at providing correctional services..." than the Federal Bureau of Prisons. In response, Issa Arnita, the spokesperson for the third largest U.S. for-profit prison operator Management and Training Corporation, said it was "disappointed" to learn about the DOJ's decision. "If the DOJ's decision to end the use of contract prisons were based solely on declining inmate populations, there may be some justification, but to base this decision on cost, safety and security, and programming is wrong." In a memorandum, Yates continued, for-profit "...prisons served an important role during a difficult period,
but time has shown that they compare poorly to our own Bureau facilities. They simply do not provide the same level of correctional services, programs, and resources; they do not save substantially on costs; and as noted in a recent report by the Department's Office of Inspector General, they do not maintain the same level of safety and security. The rehabilitative services that the Bureau provides, such as educational programs and job training, have proved difficult to replicate and outsource and these services are essential to reducing recidivism and improving public safety. Also, the recidivism rates of the private prisons, “Within three years of release, about two-thirds (67.8 percent) of released prisoners were rearrested. Within five years of release, about three-quarters (76.6 percent) of released prisoners were rearrested. Of those prisoners who were rearrested, more than half (56.7 percent) were arrested by the end of the first year.” These private prison recidivism rates, compared to the public prison's recidivism rates, are virtually identical and in return have minuscule benefits. At the time, the Justice Department held 193,000 inmates, about 22,000 of whom were in 14 private prisons. Criminal justice reform had caused the prison population to drop by about 25,000 inmates over the previous few years.

On February 23, 2017, the DOJ under Attorney General Jeff Sessions overturned the ban on using private prisons. According to Sessions, "the (Obama administration) memorandum changed long-standing policy and practice and impaired the bureau's ability to meet the future needs of the federal correctional system. Therefore, I direct the bureau to return to its previous approach." In her memo announcing the change, Deputy Attorney General Sally Yates pointed out that private prisons “compare poorly” to facilities run by the federal Bureau of Prisons. The DOJ found that, in general, private prisons provide fewer correctional services at greater security and safety risk to inmates and staff, without producing substantial savings.
These results are related. To achieve their modest savings, private prisons tend to cut back on staff costs and training. More than a decade ago, researchers found that private facilities pay their officers less, provide fewer hours of training and have higher inmate-to-staff ratios, a combination which may account for their much higher turnover rate among correctional officers, as well as the uptick in inmate assaults.

This is the conventional critique of private prisons: They do not deliver on their promise of significant savings, and the greater risk far outweighs the small fiscal benefit they provide to those within the walls.

But the evidence for this critique is mixed. As the legal scholar Sasha Volokh has pointed out, some studies have shown that public prisons are more cost-effective than their private counterparts, while others suggest the opposite. More importantly, Volokh argues that the private sector can be incentivized to improve—especially compared to the government—and that we should reform the model rather than end the experiment. If we accept the premise that private corporations should run prisons, Volokh’s argument has some force.

The real reason is that justice should not be administered through the prism of profit. As a rule, we disfavor private prosecutors hired by the victim’s family, or judges who get paid when a defendant in her court is convicted but not when he is acquitted. In both cases, the concern is obvious: We mistrust arrangements that might lead actors in the system to stray from their duty to administer justice impartially.

The problem with the private prison is analogous, though not identical. The companies that build and run private prisons have a financial interest in the continued growth of mass incarceration. That is why the two major players in this game—the Corrections Corporation of America and the GEO Group—invest
heavily in lobbying for punitive criminal justice policies and make hefty contributions to political campaigns that will increase the number of private prisons.

From 1999-2010, for instance, the Sentencing Project found that CCA spent on average $1.4 million per year on lobbying at the federal level and employed a yearly average of 70 lobbyists at the state level. In California, where state law requires lobbyists to disclose their contributions in detail, we know that CCA used its resources to support, among other things, additional adult and juvenile prisons and detention centers and to oppose a bill that would have outlawed private prisons entirely.

These corporations have every legal right to shower money on friendly legislators. But the fact that they consider it in their interest to do so is exactly what exposes their troubling conflict. Especially today, when the systemic, deeply entrenched, racialized problems with the criminal justice system are increasingly apparent, we should not endorse strategies that encourage the expansion of the carceral state.

Regrettably, this was not the explicit message in the DOJ’s announcement. But Yates at least hinted at it. Before pointing out that private prisons “compare poorly” to their public counterparts—that is, before making the conventional critique—Yates noted that the number of federal prisoners has begun to fall, in part because of a shift in law and policy away from incarceration, especially in drug cases.

As a philosophical matter, the Obama Administration is trending—albeit haltingly—toward a default preference for non-carceral solutions to crime. The best evidence strongly supports their preference. The endless churning of the incarceration cycle—the thousands of young men and women repeatedly removed from their neighborhoods, returned and removed again—systematically
destabilizes the very communities we are trying to save by disrupting the intricate but fragile webs of connection that hold them together. In fact, research has shown that high incarceration rates of the sort we have seen since the 1980s not only destabilize disadvantaged communities; they actually increase the incidence of crime. That is why former Attorney General Eric Holder recently argued that as a nation, we should aspire to send fewer people to prison for shorter periods.

This is precisely the opposite of what the private prison industry wants. While you can perhaps incentivize it to improve, you cannot incentivize a private corporation to go out of business. As long as we have private prisons, their corporate leadership will support policies that fill every bed.

There are roughly 115,000 people incarcerated in private prisons: 25,000 in the federal system and 90,000 in the states. A corporation’s bottom line should not determine their fate. The DOJ has done what it could. It is time for the states to follow the lead.
Resolution #10
Resolution Regarding Inclusion of a Hymn in Honor of Dr. Artemisia Bowden

Submitted by:
The Rev. Antonio A. Regist, President
Union of Black Episcopalians (UBE), Blessed Artemisia Bowden Chapter

Resolved, the House of ______ concurring, That this 80th General Convention Of The Episcopal Church authorizes for trial use the new hymn in Honor of Dr. Artemisia Bowden and that that hymn be integrated into the Black Saints section of the Lift Every Voice and Sing II Hymnal of The Episcopal Church.

Explanation:

Dr. Artemisia Bowden was recognized by The Episcopal Church at the 78th General Convention in 2015 as a Holy Woman and is now included in the Church's Calendar of Commemorations on August 18.

Dr. Bowden came to The Diocese of West Texas in 1902 upon the call of Bishop James Steptoe Johnston to head a school for the daughters and granddaughters of former slaves, which later became St. Philip's College, a Historically Black College.

Dr. Bowden became known as "the Savior of St. Philip's" through her determined and tireless work to keep the school open during the Great Depression when the diocese could no longer afford financial support.

As part of this work, Dr. Bowden instituted several student musical quartets to travel the United States to generate funds to keep St. Philip's doors open.

Resolution C048 of the 79th General Convention the House of Bishops Committee on Prayer Book, Liturgy and Music presented its Report #1 on Resolution C048
(Inclusion of a Hymn in Honor of Artemisia Bowden) and recommended take no further action. Motion carried. The House took no further action (Communicated to the House of Deputies in HB Message #26).

A copy of this resolution and a draft copy of the hymn composed by members of the St. Philip's College community and the Blessed Artemisia Bowden UBE Chapter will be submitted to the appropriate legislative bodies of The Episcopal Church, including specifically, Interim Body, the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music.

In fact, the May 1, 2018 Spring Concert at St. Philip’s College (HBCU) in a Denver Neighborhood better known as the “Hood”, Eastside San Antonio, Texas was a memorable experience for all in attendance. The highpoint of the Concert was the presentation for the first time of the hymn honoring Dr. Artemisia Bowden. The St. Philip’s College Student Choir, under the direction of Faculty Eric J. Schmidt, stunned the attendees with the Student Choir receiving a standing ovation for more than a minute.

The Hymn, “Artemisia, Child of God!” surpasses all expectation of enlivening and invigorating. The official hymn sheet folder will be delivered (to be attached to the Resolution) once the Resolution is accepted by The Office of The General Convention and submitted by fax to the docket of the 80th General Convention 2021 for consideration to be included in the hymnody of the Episcopal Church.

The Artemisia Bowden UBE Chapter presented donations to the “Artemisia Scholarship Program” which were received with screams of gratitude from part of the students. Many of the students that attend St. Philip’s College from the disfranchised Denver Neighborhood do not qualify for financial aid loans because they are not full-time students. Many of these part-time students are breadwinners and caregivers for their homes with drug afflicted parents, parents incarcerated and/or younger siblings at home. Others are part-time students with special needs that rely on tutoring to take a limited study load of one or two
courses at a time. These students are well deserving of the “Artemisia Scholarship Program”. These students are trying to emerge from the poverty stringent cycle condition by obtaining an education.

The inclusion of this hymn “Artemisia, Child of God” in honor of Dr. Artemisia Bowen in the hymnody of the Black Saint's section of Lift Every Voice and Sing II, the African American hymnal of the Episcopal Church, by the 80th General Convention 2021 will bring a great sense of accomplishment for St. Philip’s College Community, Denver Neighborhood, the City of San Antonio, and the Christian Community in general that finally the "World" will hear and sing the story of Blessed Artemisia Bowden.
Resolution #11
UBE Resolution Regarding the Timing of In-Person Annual Meetings

Purpose: This resolution proposes that UBE conduct in person annual gatherings of 4-5 days twice within a triennium. The third meeting may be conducted on General Convention years as a ZOOM meeting. The UBE Gala may still be held during the General Convention gathering.

Rationale: The use of technology to hold both regional and the annual meeting has received wide success with minimal cost. In these days when funds are particularly strained, using technology in addition to in-person gatherings will provide a significant savings to the organization and to individuals.

Resolved, that the Union of Black Episcopalians may host in-person Annual Business Meeting and Conference, including the Gala, twice during the triennium beginning with the 81st General Convention.

Resolved further, on the General Convention years, UBE may host a remote meeting using ZOOM or other technology. During that year UBE may host a Gala as a major fundraiser as in past years.

Resolved further, that the UBE Executive Committee may change the implementation of this resolution if conditions warrant.

Submitted By,
The Rev. Canon Lynn A. Collins, D. Min. Mr. Louis W. Glosson
Rector, St. John the Evangelist, Lynnbrook, NY Lifetime Member
Lifetime member H. Belfield Hannibal Chapter
Northeast Region Western Region

Ms. Dianne Audrick Smith
President, Wilma Combs Chapter
Lifetime Member
Midwest Region