

Resolutions

Canon 1, section 15, all resolutions presented to Council for action must be in writing and must be presented to the Secretary of the Diocese (The Rev. David Read) **no later than December 31** prior to Council: December 31, 2008 for the 2009 Council. Any resolution presented later than December 31 will not be considered by Council unless two-thirds of Council vote to consider said resolution. Additionally, any resolution dealing with "serious moral issues that deeply concern national or international affairs" must be submitted to the Secretary before December 31 and must be printed and in the hands of delegates no less than one week prior to the convening of Council.

Any resolution regarding the altering or amending of diocesan canons must be presented to the Committee on Constitution and Canons and to the Chancellor of the diocese **no later than December 31** prior to Council.

Five resolutions were received by December 31, 2008 and are presented below with explanation.

[For a printable PDF file click here.](#)

Resolution 1-2009 Anglican Covenant

WHEREAS the Diocesan Councils of 2005, 2006, and 2007 passed resolutions supporting the Windsor Report and its recommendations, and

WHEREAS the Bishop of West Texas, Gary Lillibridge, remains an ardent supporter of the Windsor process as a means towards unity and reconciliation, serving at the Archbishop of Canterbury's pleasure on the Windsor Continuation Group, and

WHEREAS the consideration of an Anglican covenant by both Provinces and dioceses represents the next step in the Windsor Process and as part of a covenant, the opportunity for individual Windsor compliant dioceses to seek recognition as Covenant partners, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED that the Diocese of West Texas fully reaffirms its commitment to the Windsor principles, including, in principle, the formation of an Anglican Covenant within the Anglican Communion to strengthen our common life and witness as the Body of Christ in order to preserve and safeguard our relationship with the Anglican Communion and the historic See of Canterbury.

EXPLANATION: The discord in the Anglican Communion and TEC continues over issues of polity and theology with unfortunate consequences for provinces, dioceses, parishes and individuals, both clergy and lay. The controversy surfaced directly in our diocese for the first time this year. The Windsor Process is the path the Diocese of West Texas has repeatedly adopted and approved by Council and Bishop Lillibridge as the

means for unity within the diocese and reconciliation amidst the Anglican Communion. This resolution reaffirms our hope in and support for that process by directing attention to the developing Anglican Covenant which will be revised this spring. A comprehensive report on the Covenant Process is expected to be made at the meeting of the Anglican Consultative Council in May 2009.

Submitted by: St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Corpus Christi
Church of the Good Shepherd, Corpus Christi
St. John's Episcopal Church, McAllen

Resolution 2-2009 Communion Partners

WHEREAS the Bishop of West Texas, Gary Lillibridge, has helped forge the Communion Partners as a relational fellowship to further the continuing Windsor process of preserving communion with the historic See of Canterbury, and

WHEREAS the express purpose of the Communion Partners is specified in the Statement of Organizing Bishops dated May 31, 2008 attached hereto, therefore:

BE IT RESOLVED that the Diocese of West Texas affirms its full support for the Communion Partners initiative.

EXPLANATION: Bishop Lillibridge has undertaken a role of leadership and participation in the Communion Partners as the means to maintain a relationship in full communion with the wider Anglican Communion while staying firmly within TEC. The member bishops (and the Communion Partners rectors organized in conjunction with the bishops' organization) seek mutual support, accountability and fellowship at a time when the climate in the House of Bishops of TEC is hyper-politicized. This resolution seeks to validate the bishop's support for this initiative and to encourage its efforts.

Submitted by: St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Corpus Christi
Church of the Good Shepherd, Corpus Christi
St. John's Episcopal Church, McAllen

Explanation of Communion Partners

In the context of discussions about the Episcopal Visitors concept announced by the Presiding Bishop at the House of Bishops meeting in New Orleans, we the undersigned have considered a need to maintain and strengthen

- our ties with the Anglican Communion
- our commitment to the observance of diocesan boundaries within the Episcopal Church
- and our exercise of our office as a focus of unity.

We believe such ties will provide the opportunity for mutual support, accountability and fellowship; and present an important sign of our connectedness in and vision for the Episcopal Church and the Anglican Communion as we move through this time of stress and renewal.

PURPOSE:

Communion Partners is intended to

- provide for those concerned a visible link to the Anglican Communion

Many within our dioceses and in congregations in other dioceses seek to be assured of their connection to the Anglican Communion. Traditionally, this has been understood in terms of bishop-to-bishop relationships. Communion Partners fleshes out this connection in a significant and symbolic way.

- provide fellowship, support and a forum for mutual concerns between bishops

The Communion Partner bishops share many concerns about the Anglican Communion and its future and look to work together with Primates and Bishops from the wider Communion. In addition, we believe we all have need of mutual encouragement, prayer, and reassurance. The Communion Partners will be a forum for these kinds of relationships.

- provide a partnership to work toward the Anglican Covenant and according to Windsor Principles

The Communion Partner bishops will work together according to the principles outlined in the Windsor Report and seek a comprehensive Anglican Covenant at the Lambeth Conference and beyond.

SCOPE:

Communion Partners

- is a relational fellowship
- are committed to honoring diocesan boundaries
- will be governed by mutual respect
- and will proceed by invitation and cooperation.

PARTICIPANTS:

- Communion Partner Bishops
- Communion Partner Primates (initially, Tanzania, West Indies, Jerusalem and Middle East, Burundi, Indian Ocean)
- Clergy and congregations who share Communion Partner commitments
- Other interested Bishops of the Episcopal Church

TRANSPARENCY:

Communication of activities with

- the Presiding Bishop of TEC,
- the Archbishop of Canterbury,
- the Meeting of Primates, and
- the Anglican Communion Office, and through them the Anglican Consultative Council

Resolution 3-2009
TEC Litigation Expense Disclosure

Be it RESOLVED that the Diocese of West Texas requests that the office of the Presiding Bishop of The Episcopal Church provide the following information to each diocese of the Church:

- the dollar amount spent by TEC on litigation against dioceses, parishes, groups of churches and individuals since General Convention 2006;
- a list of the church accounts and/or budget items from which these funds were taken;
- the proposed amount of money for litigation to be presented to the 2009 General Convention.

RESOLVED, that the Secretary of Council of the Diocese communicate this request to the Presiding Bishop upon passage.

RESOLVED, that the Presiding Bishop's response be reported to the clergy and people of the Diocese prior to commencement of General Convention 2009.

EXPLANATION: TEC has intervened and engaged in litigation in numerous dioceses across the country in cases involving property disputes with local parishes which have elected to depart TEC. This litigation has been initiated by either the local diocese or the parish against the other party. TEC has then intervened as a party in interest aligned with the local diocese. Substantial legal fees and related expenses have been incurred on behalf of TEC. Beginning in 2007, requests have been made by various parties to the Executive Council which is responsible for the governance of TEC between General Conventions for financial disclosure of the source of the funds and the amounts expended. However no response has been made to date.

Submitted by: St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Corpus Christi
Church of the Good Shepherd, Corpus Christi
St. John's Episcopal Church, McAllen

Resolution 4-2009
TEC Litigation Forbearance Policy

Be it RESOLVED, the Diocese of West Texas requests that The Episcopal Church and all Dioceses, parishes and bishops adopt a policy of negotiation and/or mediation with regard to disputes over property and do everything in their power to cease and desist from engaging in secular lawsuits with fellow Christians.

RESOLVED, that the Secretary of Council of the Diocese communicate this request to the office of the Presiding Bishop and Executive Council of The Episcopal Church.

RESOLVED, that the Secretary of the Diocese report the Presiding Bishop's and Executive Council's response be reported to the clergy and people of the Diocese prior to the commencement of General Convention 2009.

EXPLANATION: The litigation in civil courts between parishes, dioceses and TEC has been increasing exponentially across the country since 2006. Often times, the common practice in the secular world of "racing to the courthouse" for position as the party plaintiff without prior meaningful negotiation has been the rule rather than the exception. Suits among Christians are contrary to Scripture and should be the alternative of last resort.

Submitted by: St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Corpus Christi
Church of the Good Shepherd, Corpus Christi
St. John's Episcopal Church, McAllen

Resolution 5-2009
Affirming the Integrity of Diocesan Governance
In the Episcopal Church

WHEREAS, the General Convention of The Episcopal Church and the Office of the Presiding Bishop are constitutionally and historically instruments of the various dioceses, and serve at the pleasure and for the benefit of the dioceses; and

WHEREAS, in a letter dated October 14, 2007 to Bishop John W. Howe of the Diocese of Central Florida, the Archbishop of Canterbury affirms that, "The organ of union with the wider Church is the Bishop and the Diocese rather than the Provincial structure as such;" and

WHEREAS, the Communion Partners Bishops, of which our bishop, the Rt. Rev. Gary Lillibridge, is a participant, has stated that the office of "bishop" is the focus of unity for The Episcopal Church, and that "Traditionally, this has been understood in terms of bishop-to-bishop relationships;" and

WHEREAS, the General Convention Budget has historically been funded by dioceses based on their financial capability and voluntary choice;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the 105th Council of the Diocese of West Texas affirms that the Diocese of West Texas is in union with the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church of Jesus Christ directly through the Anglican Communion, its Instruments of Unity, and our Diocesan Bishop, the Rt. Rev. Gary Lillibridge; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Council accepts no actions by General Convention that would reverse the authority roles between Dioceses and the General Convention, or would grant the Office of the Presiding Bishop executive powers over Dioceses and their Bishops; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Council accepts no specific actions by General Convention that would

- mandate financial assessments from Dioceses to the General Convention budget;
- unilaterally impose trust interests on diocesan and congregational assets.

EXPLANATION: This is a proactive resolution focused on issues that are expected to come up at General Convention 2009 that, if enacted, would be detrimental to the Diocese of West Texas as well as to other Windsor dioceses. The resolution does not seek to establish anything new. Rather, it seeks to maintain the polity that has historically existed between dioceses, and between dioceses and TEC. While it is specific to the issues of financial assessments and trust interests (because they have reportedly been discussed by TEC's Executive Council and TEC's Chancellor), the resolution fundamentally reaffirms the existing vertical relationship directly between our Diocesan Bishop and the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the horizontal relationship between Diocesan bishops.

Submitted by: Christ Episcopal Church, San Antonio
St. John's Episcopal Church, McAllen
St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Brownsville
Trinity Episcopal Church, Junction
St. Thomas' Episcopal Church, San Antonio