

PRELIMINARY REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON RESOLUTIONS

The Committee on Resolutions received three proposed resolutions by the January 16, 2007 deadline for submissions, one of which has since been withdrawn. The remaining proposals are reported below, having been edited as to form. The proposers may make additional revisions prior to submission to Convention.

Following hearings at the preconvention meetings and at the formal hearing of the Committee to be held beginning at 10:00 a.m. on Saturday, February 24, 2007, in the Matthews Room at Diocesan House, 808 West State Street, Trenton, the Committee will prepare its Final Report with its recommendations, if any, with respect to the proposals. It is the Final Report that will be submitted to Convention.

As provided by the Rules of Order, proposed resolutions not timely submitted to the Committee on Resolutions, and not required by canon to be submitted to some other committee, may be brought to the floor of Convention for consideration only upon a two-thirds vote of Convention.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Ambos, Chair
Committee on Resolutions

RESOLUTION 2007-1:

Subject: Restorative Justice

Be It Resolved, That the Diocese of New Jersey adhere to Resolution A127 (Restorative Justice) and Resolution A123 (Slavery and Racial Reconciliation) of the 75th General Convention of The Episcopal Church in 2006, which asks dioceses to "conduct truth and reconciliation processes in regard to other histories and legacies of racial discrimination and oppression that may be applicable in their geographic area, while not diminishing the strong call to focus on the history and legacy of slavery" and to give a "progress report" to the Anti-Racism Committee of the Executive Council (A127); and be it

Further resolved, That the Bishop of this Diocese in consultation with the diocesan Anti-Racism Commission appoint a committee, as may seem appropriate to them, which shall be known as the Taskforce on Restorative Justice to research, to document, and to provide the required written report, said report to trace the historical involvement of this diocese and geographical area in the institution of slavery and the economic benefits realized due to that involvement; and be it

Further resolved, That preparation of the report should include at least one public forum and that copies of a progress report be made publicly available by the 2008 Convention of the Diocese; and be it

Further resolved, That this report detail post-slavery issues of discrimination and societal privilege due to the legacy of slavery in this Diocese and this geographical area; and be it

Further resolved, That this report deal with concerns of restorative justice in regard to slavery by considering the desirability of possible reparations and the form such reparations might take; and be it

Further resolved, That the diocesan report, having been reviewed under the direction of diocesan Anti-Racism Commission at the Convention of 2008, then be submitted to the Executive Committee of this church as directed by resolution A127.

SUBMITTED BY: The Rev'd Terrence Rosheuvel, The Rev'd Joan Fleming, the Rev'd Andrea R. Hayden, the Rev'd Peter Stimpson, the Rev'd John Thompson-Quartey, the Rev'd Stephen White, Barbara Okamoto Bach, Annette Buchanan, and Charles Hughes (members of the Anti-Racism Commission)

Statement in Support of Resolution 2007-1 by Proposers:

This resolution follows the directives of the National Church contained in resolutions A123 and A127 (2006). Slavery and its legacy are a major issue of social justice and moral substance for the citizens of this country and, in particular, for the members of this church body due to our baptismal covenant. The perpetuation of the institution of slavery was supported and enforced for many years by the governments, national and state, and by many people of this land. No compensation or other type of remuneration was ever granted or allowed to those held in bondage for their labor and contributions to this society.

The legacy of slavery has continued to this day and manifests itself in generational lack of opportunity, education, and discrimination for those who are descendants of the slaves. American society has paid, and continues to pay, a great price for this injustice which has inflicted so much harm upon an innocent people and their descendants. This resolution calls upon this diocese to recognize these facts and to work towards a healing and restorative process of reconciliation.

RESOLUTION 2007-2:

Subject: Expression of Gratitude and Regret

Be it Resolved, That this 223rd Annual Convention of the Diocese of New Jersey acknowledges its deepest respect and gratitude to the delegates of the 75th General Convention of the Episcopal Church who prayerfully struggled in conscience with their vote on Resolution B033 (On Election of Bishops); and be it

Further resolved, That the Diocese of New Jersey, mindful of our baptismal covenant to "strive for justice and peace among all peoples and respect the dignity of every human being," expresses its deepest regret for the pain and anguish suffered by our gay and lesbian brothers and sisters, their families, and friends, due to the adoption of Resolution B033; and be it

Further resolved, That the Diocese of New Jersey continue to offer forgiveness to each other and to others in the world-wide Anglican Communion as we seek to enter into deeper levels of communion with one another.

Submitted by: The Oasis Taskforce of the Diocese of New Jersey: The Rev'd Dr. Cipher Deavours, Dcn., St. John's Church, Elizabeth (taskforce co-leader); the Rev'd Ms. Teresa Suruda, Dcn., Trinity Church, Matawan (taskforce co-leader); the Rev'd Ms. Cornelia P. Spoor, Dcn., Grace-St. Paul's Church, Mercerville; the Rev'd Mr. Eric Brechner, St. John's-in-the-Wilderness, Gibbsboro; the Rev'd Mr. Robert L. Counselman, Trinity Church, Woodbridge; the Rev'd Ms. Susan B. P. Norris, Grace-St. Paul's Church, Mercerville; the Rev'd Mr. Mark H. Chattin, Holy Trinity Church, Collingswood; the Rev'd Dr. Patrick R. Close, Grace Church, Haddonfield; Mr. Louis A. Cavaliere, St. Martin-in-the-Fields Church, Lumberton; and Mr. Theodore A Foley, St. Peter's Church, Spotswood.

Statement in Support of Resolution 2007-2 by Proposers:

Last year this convention passed Resolution 2006-3 (Inclusiveness), affirming that "it is a welcoming diocese for all people, and that no condition or requirement, either overt or implied, based on race, gender, or sexual orientation, be permitted for any church-related position or other program of this Diocese, including all clerical offices throughout the Diocese". The adoption of this resolution was indeed good news to our LGBTI (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered, Intersex) brothers and sisters and to all those who stand by their side in their struggle for justice in society and the church.

Last year this convention also passed Resolution 2006-4 (On the Windsor Report). The statement in support of this resolution explained that, "The Windsor Report has many ideas and proposals which may affect our common life together as Anglicans. These ideas and proposals are the beginning of a conversation regarding the future of Anglicanism. They are not necessarily the final word. They need to be thoughtfully and prayerfully considered before being accepted or rejected."

In June of last year the 75th triennial General Convention of the Episcopal Church adopted several resolutions to further signal the intentions of the Episcopal Church to remain within the Anglican Communion. Resolution A160 (Expression of Regret) was adopted to express "regret for straining the bonds of affection in the events surrounding the General Convention of 2003 and the consequences which followed". Resolution A165 (Commitment to Windsor and Listening Processes) was also adopted and commits the Episcopal Church to "a process of discernment as to the nature and unity of the Church".

In addition to the above resolutions the General Convention was also asked to respond to the suggestion of the Windsor Report to "effect a moratorium on the consecration of any candidate to the episcopate who is living in a same-gender union until some new consensus in the Anglican Communion emerges". Resolution A161 (Election of Bishops) was one proposed response to the Windsor Report. However, this resolution was rejected by the convention. After a great deal of prayer and discussion Resolution B033, calling for "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," was passed by the Convention.

The proposers of this resolution acknowledge how difficult it must have been for some to vote in favor of B033. We understand that many had voted for B033 as a relinquishment so that "our 26th Presiding Bishop and our members of the Anglican Consultative Council [may] have an opportunity to be at the table, to engage in those conversations" to take place in the Anglican Communion (Presiding Bishop Frank Griswold's address to the General Convention, June 21, 2006). We are grateful to all of the delegates for their hard work and prayerful consideration of their voting decisions.

However it must be recognized that, in the attempt to avoid "further strains on the communion," the passage of B033 by the Episcopal Church has inflicted a great deal of pain and anguish on gays, lesbians, their families, and friends. To many, B033 is a continuation of the injustices that are so often inflicted by society at large.

For the sake of those who have experienced this pain, we strongly support this resolution.