

*** FINAL VERSION - Concurred**

Resolution: **D055**
Title: **Reaffirm Tithe as Minimum Standard**
Topic: **Tithing**
Committee: **17 - Stewardship and Development**
House of Initial Action: **Bishops**
Proposer: **Mr. Albert T. Mollegen Jr.**

Resolved, the House of Deputies concurring, That the 76th General Convention reaffirm the tithe as the minimum standard of giving for Episcopalians; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention Secretariat is requested to make provisions for the members of each House conveniently to indicate that they either are tithing or are firmly committed to tithing within five years, by signing their name and clearly printing their name and diocese, or, if they feel it inappropriate to make such a private matter public, signing and clearly printing the word "Anonymous" and giving either their state of residence or the state or foreign country where they were born; and be it further

Resolved, That the record of names and "Anonymous" signings be published in the Convention Journal and in such other Church publications as the Presiding Bishop may designate.

EXPLANATION

In living memory, the 1982 General Convention was the first to state that the tithe is "the minimum standard of giving for Episcopalians." Several subsequent Conventions have re-affirmed this concept in the same or similar language. In the 1982 Stewardship Legislative Committee, there was vigorous debate as to whether the resolution should be a canon (they decided "no"), whether passing such a resolution was too legalistic, whether the resolution should specify whether the calculation should be based on before-tax or after-tax income, whether the calculation is restricted to gifts to this Church or whether financial support for other Godly work should be included, and so on. The 1982 Committee ultimately intentionally left such matters up to each individual Church member to decide. Subsequent Conventions have followed this precedent. Tithing is an important spiritual discipline. Except in the most unusual circumstances, it is a major contributor to the giver's spiritual health and inner joy.

Note that the sometimes-offered wording "biblical tithe" is inaccurate because the word "tithe" does not always refer to the same thing in different places in the bible: sometimes it refers to income, sometimes to property. Other biblical standards include "all" as in "You shall love the Lord your God with all..." and 50-50, as in "If you have two cloaks..."

** Note: The final language, as well as the final status of each resolution, is being reviewed by the General Convention office. The Journal of the 76th General Convention and the Constitution and Canons will be published once the review process has been completed.*

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Proposed Stewardship Statement

Made in the image of our Triune, gift-giving God, we as members of the Diocese of New Jersey are called to be gift givers too. During this time of economic insecurity and financial instability, we bear witness to our confidence in Jesus Christ. We do not believe that the long storm of fiscal crisis before us will undo us. The Holy Spirit is with us, telling us that we are not done. Our mission is not completed, finished or defeated. Instead we are called to praise the Lord during these challenging times. We are grateful to God for what we have been given in the past and trust that God will supply all of our needs in the present and uncertain future. Before God's bounty and generosity we choose to be unrelenting in our praise, worship and adoration of God while offering generous, self-giving, sacrificial acts of God's love as disciples of Jesus.

In addition, we the members of Diocesan Council of the Diocese of New Jersey personally commit ourselves to a lifestyle of tithing or a personal program which will bring us to this standard of giving. As leaders of congregations that give their utmost for the Fair Share financial support to the ongoing ministry of the Diocese, we ask all members of the Diocese to join us as generous stewards furthering the Kingdom of God in our parishes, our Diocese, in our world.

We are inspired by the leadership of our Diocesan Bishop George Cancell, believing with him that "God is Good all the time". God is calling us to "make New Jersey New" and to be known as the Diocese that praised God, as Christ bearers at this moment of history, in this place, before these particular trying circumstances and human conditions of need that surround us all. We feel blessed to be the Diocese of New Jersey at this time.

This statement was adopted and supported by Diocesan Council members.

The Rev. Valerie L. Balling	Mr. Morris Anderson
The Rev. Brian K. Burgess	Mr. James Bathurst
The Rev. Pedro S. Guzman	Ms. Cheryl Browne
The Rev. Bruce Montgomery	Mrs. Noreen L. Duncan
The Rev. Canon Servio R. Moscoso	Mr. Henry Foster
The Rev. Arthur P. Powell	Ms. Elsa Fuentes
The Rev. C. John Thompson-Quartey	Mr. Jay Ham
The Rev. Paul A. Van Sant, Sr.	Mr. Robert McGonigle
The Rev. Dr. Gina Walsh-Minor	Mr. Ronald J. Sheay