

What Did General Convention 2006 Do?

The following is a summary of major actions taken at the Episcopal Church's 75th General Convention in Columbus, Ohio. Because of their significance for inter-Anglican relations, resolutions related to our response to the Windsor Report are reproduced here in their entirety. Where indicated, resolution numbers are given in brackets.

General Business

- Elected Bishop of Nevada Katharine Jefferts Schori as the 26th Presiding Bishop; and elected Vice President of the House of Deputies Bonnie Anderson, of Michigan, as President of the House of Deputies.
 - Added to Lesser Feasts and Fasts dates honoring Philander Chase, William Temple, Deaconess Harriet Bedell, social reformer Vida Scudder, educator and African American spokesperson Anna Julia Cooper, educator and juvenile justice reformer, Frances Joseph-Gaudet, Thurgood Marshall, Oscar Romero, Joan of Arc, James Holly, Tikon, Florence Li Tim Oi, the Martyrs of Sudan, and remembering victims of genocide.
 - Established closer ties with the United Methodist Church, allowing for joint celebrations of the Eucharist.
 - Authorized trial use of new liturgies for rites of passages, such as coming of age; and approved the Revised Common Lectionary as the official lectionary, replacing the current BCP lectionary.
 - Confirmed that communion is limited to those baptized in the name of the Trinity; affirmed the “authority of the triune God, exercised through Scripture.”
 - Sent the proposed changes to Title IV (disciplinary canons) back to a committee, made several changes to the canons affecting bishops, defined Province IX, created a more flexible timeline for those seeking ordination, and changed how clergy are received from other denominations.
 - Confirmed the elections of bishops in Albany, Texas, West Texas, Eastern Michigan, California, and Northern California.
 - Apologized for the Church's complicity and participation in slavery; authorized Commissions on Racism to oversee research in every diocese to identify the ways the Church was complicit; and requested a report to the next General Convention on how amends could be made.
 - Restructured the standing committees of the church by standardizing their size and composition, and endorsed the Anglican Consultative Council's resolution that women should have equal representation in all the Councils of the Church.
 - Endorsed the Millennium Development Goals by supporting the ONE campaign, which sets a goal of raising spending to 1% of all budgets and 1% additional funds in the federal budget for Millennium Development efforts; supported HIV/AIDS awareness efforts; affirmed concern about global warming and defined it as a spiritual issue; affirmed the right of workers to form and join unions; allocated funds to the Episcopal Network for Economic Justice for congregational training; and set principles for the just treatment of all immigrants.
 - Increased from 10 to 15 the number of placements in the Young Adult Service Corps; encouraged dioceses to grant campus ministries mission congregation status; and provided \$65,000 for a camp for children of prisoners.
 - Directed General Convention to provide childcare for its 2009 meeting.
 - Opposed efforts to criminalize homosexuality, to limit civil rights of homosexuals, and went on record as opposing efforts to amend state and federal constitutions to pass so-called “marriage amendments” or limit civil unions; and reiterated the Church position that gays and lesbians are “children of God who have a full and equal claim with all other persons upon the love, acceptance, and pastoral concern and care of the Church.”
-
- *Resolved*, the House of Deputies concurring, That the 75th General Convention affirm that no resolution of the General Convention is intended to affect either the historic separate and independent status of the churches of the Anglican Communion or the legal identity of The Episcopal Church. [B032]
 - *Resolved*, the House of Deputies concurring, That the 75th General Convention receive and embrace The Windsor Report's invitation to engage in a process of healing and reconciliation; and be it further *Resolved*, that this Convention therefore call upon Standing Committees and bishops with jurisdiction to exercise 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. [B 033]
 - *Resolved*, the House of Bishops concurring, That the 75th General Convention of The Episcopal Church reaffirm the abiding commitment of The Episcopal Church to the fellowship of churches that constitute the Anglican Communion and seek to live into the highest degree of communion possible; and be it further *Resolved*, That the 75th General Convention reaffirm that The Episcopal Church is in communion with the See of Canterbury, upholding and propagating the historic Faith and Order as set forth in the Book of Common Prayer; and be it further *Resolved*, That the 75th General Convention join with the Archbishop of Canterbury, the primates, and the Anglican Consultative Council in making a commitment to the vision of interdependent life in Christ, characterized by forbearance, trust, and respect, and commend the Windsor Report and process as a means of deepening our understanding of that commitment; and be

it further

Resolved, That as an expression of interdependence, the Presiding offices of both Houses work in partnership with the churches of the Anglican Communion to explore ways by which there might be inter-Anglican consultation and participation on Standing Commissions of the General Convention of The Episcopal Church.

[A159]

- *Resolved*, the House of Bishops concurring, that the 75th General Convention of The Episcopal Church, mindful of “the repentance, forgiveness, and reconciliation enjoined on us by Christ” (Windsor Report, paragraph 134), express its regret for straining the bonds of affection in the events surrounding the General Convention of 2003 and the consequences which followed; offer its sincerest apology to those within our Anglican Communion who are offended by our failure to accord sufficient importance to the impact of our actions on our church and other parts of the Communion; and ask forgiveness as we seek to live into deeper levels of communion one with another. [A160]
- *Resolved*, that the House of Bishops concurring, That the 75th General Convention of the Episcopal Church affirm the centrality of effective and appropriate pastoral care for all members of this church and all who come seeking the aid of this church; and be it further
Resolved, That the 75th General Convention commit the Episcopal Church to the ongoing engagement of and sensitive response to the request and need of all the people of God – in particular, but not exclusively, those who agree and those who disagree with the actions of this body, those who feel isolated thereby, and gay and lesbian persons within and without this Church; and be it further
Resolved, That the 75th General Convention recognize the agonizing position of those who do not feel able to receive appropriate pastoral care from their own bishops, and urges the members of the House of Bishops to seek the highest degree of communion and reconciliation within their own dioceses, using when requested in good faith the Delegated Episcopal Pastoral Oversight (DEPO) process detailed in the March 2004 statement of the House of Bishops, “Caring for All the Churches”; and be it further
Resolved, That the 75th General Convention urge continued maintenance of historic diocesan boundaries, the authority of the diocesan bishop, and respect for the historical relationships of the separate and autonomous Provinces of the Anglican Communion. [A163]
- *Resolved*, the House of Deputies concurring, That the 75th General Convention of The Episcopal Church commend the Windsor Report “as offering a way forward for the mutual life of our Communion” (Primates’ Communiqué), and as an essential and

substantive contribution to the process of living into deeper levels of communion and interdependence across the Anglican Communion; and be it further

Resolved, That the 75th General Convention commit The Episcopal Church to the ongoing “Windsor Process,” a process of discernment as to the nature and unity of the Church, as we pursue a common life of dialogue, listening, and growth, formed and informed by the bonds of communion we share ; and urge all members of this church to commit themselves to the call of greater communion and interdependent life; and be it further
Resolved, that the 75th General Convention commend the “listening process” as recommended in the Windsor Report, “so that greater common understanding might be obtained on the underlying issue of same gender relationships” (Windsor Report, ¶135), and be it further
Resolved, that the 75th General Convention gratefully acknowledge the practical steps taken by the Anglican Communion Office to begin a formal “listening process” across the Communion, and be it further
Resolved, that the 75th General Convention commit this church to participating fully and openly in this “listening process,” both at the local level and with the rest of the Communion (ACC 13, Resolution 12) , and be it further
Resolved, that a staff person at The Episcopal Church Center be identified to forward this listening process in coordination with the cognate person for the Communion and with our Communion partners. [A165]

- *Resolved*, the House of Deputies concurring, That the 75th General Convention of the Episcopal Church, as a demonstration of our commitment to mutual responsibility and interdependence in the Anglican Communion, support the process of the development of an Anglican Covenant that underscores our unity in faith, order, and common life in the service of God’s mission; and be it further
Resolved, That the 75th General Convention direct the International Concerns Standing Committee of the Executive Council and the Episcopal Church’s members of the Anglican Consultative Council to follow the development processes of an Anglican Covenant in the Communion, and report regularly to the Executive Council as well as to the 76th General Convention; and be it further
Resolved, That the 75th General Convention report these actions supporting the Anglican Covenant development process, noting such missiological and theological resources as the Standing Commission on World Mission and the House of Bishops’ Theology Committee to the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Joint Standing Committee of the Anglican Consultative Council and the Primates, and the Secretary General of the Anglican Communion; and that the Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church report the same to the Primates of the churches of the Anglican Communion. [A166]