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## Prayers for Troubled Times

O God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, our only Savior, the Prince of Peace: Give us grace seriously to lay to heart the great dangers we are in by our unhappy divisions; take away all hatred and prejudice, and whatever else may hinder us from godly union and concord; that, as there is but one Body and one Spirit, one hope of our calling, one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of us all, so we may be all of one heart and of one soul, united in one holy bond of truth and peace, of faith and charity, and may with one mind and one mouth glorify you; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen*

—BCP, Page 818

Almighty and everliving God, source of all wisdom and understanding, be present with those who take counsel in the Diocese of Pittsburgh for the renewal and mission of your Church. Teach us in all things to seek first your honor and glory. Guide us to perceive what is right, and grant us both the courage to pursue it and the grace to accomplish it; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen*.

—BCP, Page 818

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## The Episcopal Church, USA

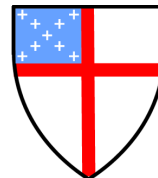
### Includes

9 provinces  
11 seminaries  
More than 100 dioceses  
and other jurisdictions worldwide  
Over 2.5 million people

### And the following (among others)

20/20: The Episcopal Church in Mission  
Episcopal Church Women  
*Episcopal Life*  
The ECUSA Anglican and Global Relations Office  
Episcopal Parish Services  
Episcopal Relief and Development  
Jerusalem 2000: Building Presence,  
Building Peace  
The Church Pension Fund  
The Episcopal Church Foundation  
The Episcopal Network for Stewardship  
The Society for the Increase of Ministry  
Episcopal Community Services in America (new)  
The Episcopal Evangelical Education Society

*Isn't this still the church that welcomes you?*



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## Why not? A call to patience in the Diocese of Pittsburgh

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The intention of the resolutions for the 9/27/03 special convention has not been explained fully. The resolutions appear intended

- To influence the upcoming Primate's meeting by creating an air of crisis and the impression that an integral part of the ECUSA is willing to separate from it because of the church's "apostasy."
- To create a framework to facilitate the orderly separation of parishes and dioceses from the ECUSA.

Whatever our view of the actions of General Convention, it would be prudent for us all to consider prayerfully, deliberately, and responsibly how best to move forward together. The proposed resolutions are technically deficient and otherwise flawed and uncharitable, as is often the case when passions of the moment overrule our need to await the still, small voice of God.

This brochure explores some of the problems of the proposed resolutions. Asked about passing these resolutions, many have replied, "Why not?" Read on, and you will see.

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# The Resolutions

The text of the resolutions may be found at <http://www.pgh.anglican.org> on the World Wide Web and is not reproduced here. Below are resolution titles, along with important issues for your consideration.

## **Resolution 1: Unconstitutional Actions of the 74<sup>th</sup> General Convention**

- The actions of General Convention were in no way irregular, and the votes in question were carried by substantial majorities.
- General Convention might have acted unwisely, but it did not act unconstitutionally. The decisions violated none of the core doctrines or historic definitions of the faith, including the Articles of Religion, the Book of Common Prayer, the creeds, or Lambeth Resolution 11 of 1888. There is therefore no apostasy.
- The diocesan constitution binds us to General Convention actions unconditionally (I.1).

*Resolution 1 is wrong on the facts and illegal in its intent.*

## **Resolution 2: Appeal for Intervention and Recognition by Anglican Communion Primates**

- This resolution casually dismisses approximately 100 dioceses and their people, including those whose bishops voted as ours did but who have counseled prayer and understanding.

- The Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh has no legal or canonical existence outside the structure of the ECUSA.
- The Primates can, in reality, give or take away nothing more than their fellowship. The ECUSA will continue irrespective of what the Primates do or say.

*Resolution 2 is audacious in asking the Primates to grant what it is not within their power to give, namely to make a small group of dissidents, instead of the current ECUSA, into the Episcopal Church.*

## **Resolution 3: Episcopal Care for Beleaguered Clergy and Congregations**

- National churches, not Primates, establish dioceses and appoint missionary bishops.
- This is an invitation to create a confusing web of unspecified, conflicting jurisdictions.

*Resolution 3 asks the Primates to do what our and other dissident bishops are apparently reluctant to do, namely to interfere in other dioceses.*

## **Resolution 4: Missionary Vocation and Mission Funding**

- This resolution allows the diversion of money from the purposes for which it was originally given.
- The Bishop and Diocesan Council are given total control of funds. It is unclear whether the intention is to circumvent the financial controls of diocesan canon XII.

*Resolution 4 breaks faith with those who have given funds and appears to give the Bishop control of money without corresponding accountability.*

## **Resolution 5: Dissenting Congregations in Pittsburgh**

- The seeming intention is to appear charitable toward churches faithful to the ECUSA, but the short-term nature of the resolution provides no substantial reassurance.
- It is demeaning and unnecessary for a faithful parish to have to “negotiate” with a bishop who has abandoned the ECUSA.

*Whereas Resolution 3 attempts to provide unspecified but permanent help for dissident parishes in other dioceses, Resolution 5 provides only uncertainty for faithful parishes in our own diocese.*

## **Resolution 6: Title to Property**

- This resolution is contrary to the diocesan constitution (X, 2) and to the national canons (I,7.4). To amend our own constitution, as this effectively tries to do, requires two successive annual conventions (XV).
- Property is held by the diocese in trust for the ECUSA. This resolution requires the diocese to abrogate its fiduciary responsibility.
- The resolution invites lawsuits against the diocese, against individual churches, and between members of individual congregations.

*Resolution 6 addresses real estate, which has invariably been the sticky issue when a congregation has wanted to break away from a church. Though seemingly fair, it is illegal and irresponsible.*