

General Convention of The Episcopal Church 2024 Archives' Research Report

Resolution No.: 2024-B006
Title: Include the Episcopal Church in Micronesia in the Diocese of Hawai'i
Proposer: Fitzpatrick, Rt. Rev. Rober
Topic: Dioceses

Directly Related: (Attached)

2006-A084 Amend Canons III.17.7 and I.11.2 [Of Missionary Jurisdictions]
2000-A129 Direct the Executive Council to Develop Relationships with Overseas Dioceses
1979-C042 Amend Canon I.10 [Add Sec. 3(b): Transfer of Area Missions] and Renumber Accordingly
1973-A059 Adopt a New Canon I.10 [Of Missionary Jurisdictions]

Indirectly Related: (Available in the [Acts of Convention](#) database, searchable by resolution number)

None

In preparing this report, the Archives researched the resolutions in the Acts of Convention database for the period 1973 through 2022, selecting "direct" resolutions that have a substantive bearing on the proposed legislation. The "direct" resolutions are attached and "indirect" resolutions are available in the Acts of Convention database. Committee members who require other research assistance should contact the Archives through the [Research Request Form](#).

B006 - Include the Episcopal Church in Micronesia in the Diocese of Hawai'i

Final Status: Not Yet Finalized

Proposed by: Fitzpatrick, Rt. Rev. Robert

Endorsed by: Akiyama, The Rt. Rev. Diana, Lattime, The Rt. Rev. Mark

Has Budget Implications: No

Cost:

Amends C&C or Rules of Order: No

Requests New Interim Body: No

Changes Mandate Of Existing Ib: No

Directs Dfms Staff: No

Directs Dioceses: No

Directs Executive Council: No

HiA: No House Assigned

Legislative Committee Currently Assigned: No Committee Assigned

Completion Status: Incomplete

Latest House Action: N/A

Supporting Documents: Yes

Resolution Text

Resolved, the House of _____ concurring,

That the 81st General Convention approve the expansion of the boundaries of the Diocese of Hawai'i to include Guam and Saipan, which currently comprise the Episcopal Church in Micronesia, and the extinguishment of the separate entity known as the Episcopal Church in Micronesia.

Explanation

The Diocese of Hawai'i and the Episcopal Church in Micronesia have long been in close relationship, extending well before each entity assumed its current form. Since its admission as a diocese in 1969, the Diocese of Hawai'i has consisted of the islands of the Hawai'ian Island group that form the State of Hawai'i. The Episcopal Church in Micronesia (ECIM) currently comprises St. John's Church on the island of Guam and a preaching station of that church that is located on the island of Saipan. ECIM is under the jurisdiction of the Presiding Bishop, who since 2009 has designated the Bishop of Hawai'i as Bishop-in-Charge.

Recent years have seen an increasing closeness between the Diocese of Hawai'i and the ECIM. Changes in technology have meant that a representative from Guam can serve on

Diocesan Council or the Standing Committee of the Diocese relatively easily. The clergy of the ECIM are canonically resident in the Diocese. ECIM clergy attend Conventions in Hawai'i as voting members and laity as guests. Individuals from St. John's Church do discernment for ordination with the Diocese's Commission on Ministry. Banking and business connections between Hawai'i and Guam are strong, making support available.

In the light of these developments, the Diocese of Hawai'i and the ECIM wish officially to become a single entity, by expanding the boundaries of the Diocese to include Guam and Saipan, and extinguishing the separate entity known as the Episcopal Church in Micronesia. As evidenced in the supporting documents provided with this Resolution, all the relevant stakeholders support this action – the Bishop of Hawai'i and the Diocesan Convention, on behalf of the Diocese; and the Presiding Bishop and the Bishop's Council of Advice, on behalf of the ECIM. These documents include a resolution adopted by the Convention of the Diocese of Hawai'i on October 21, 2023, as well as an agreement signed [on DATE] by the Bishop of Hawai'i, the Standing Committee and Diocesan Council of the Diocese of Hawai'i, the Presiding Bishop, and the ECIM Bishop's Council of Advice, setting out various terms.

Historical context

Guam became a U.S. territory in 1898, and its relationship with The Episcopal Church began shortly thereafter. In the early 1900s, the Missionary Districts of the Church – areas outside of Dioceses that the House of Bishops could place under the charge of a Bishop for missionary purposes^[1] – included Honolulu and the Philippine Islands.^[2] In 1904, the House of Bishops placed the island of Guam under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of the Philippine Islands.^[3] Nearly a half century later, in 1949, the House of Bishops transferred Guam from the jurisdiction of the Bishop of the Philippine Islands to that of the Bishop of Honolulu.^[4]

On August 21, 1959, Hawai'i became a State of the United States. In October 1959, the House of Bishops in a special meeting adopted resolutions stating that “the Missionary District of Honolulu be defined and limited geographically as comprising those islands of the Hawaiian Island group which form the State of Hawaii” and “affirm[ing]” that “ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the islands of Midway, Wake, Guam and American Samoa in the Pacific Ocean belongs to the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America, the charge thereof being placed upon the Presiding Bishop with the power of appointing some other Bishop of this Church as his substitute in such charge.”^[5] Shortly after the House's action, in October 1959 the Presiding Bishop appointed the Bishop of Honolulu to take charge of the jurisdiction made up of Midway, Wake, Guam and American Samoa.^[6] Various Presiding Bishops have designated either the Bishop of Hawai'i (1989-c.1995) (2009-present) or the Suffragan Bishop for Armed Forces (1979-1989, c.1997-2009) as bishop-in-charge.

In 1969, the General Convention established the Diocese of Hawai'i. As a result, oversight of Guam passed from a Missionary Bishop to the Bishop Diocesan of Hawai'i.

Status of ECIM

The precise canonical status of Guam, and therefore ECIM, is murky. The Journals of the General Convention have variously listed Guam as listed as an “unorganized” overseas diocese (1970) and an “Extra-Territorial” entity (1979). The adoption in 1979 of the moniker “Episcopal Church in Micronesia” for the churches in Guam and the consequent creation of a corporation sole bearing the same name – actions apparently accomplished without House of Bishops or General Convention action – suggest that the Presiding Bishop at the time likely regarded the churches in Guam as akin to “congregations in foreign lands,” over which the Canons gave (and still give) the Presiding Bishop direct and full authority. Nevertheless, in their 1981 commentary, White & Dykman, in their discussion of the Canon on Congregations in Foreign Lands (now Canon I.15), stated:

[1] See Const. Art. VI.1 (1904); Canon 10.I (1904). These provisions are similar to the current Const. Art. VI.1 (2022) and Canon I.11.2 (2022).

[2] See Journal of General Convention (JGC) 1904 at vii.

[3] See JGC 1904 at 790-80.

[4] See JGC 1949 at 32.

[5] JGC 1961 at 80.

[6] JGC 1961 at 19.



Resolution Number: 2006-A084
Title: Amend Canons III.17.7 and I.11.2 [Of Missionary Jurisdictions]
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That Canon III.17.7 is hereby amended and that the deleted sentence be moved to Canon I.11.2:

Sec. 7. In the event of a vacancy in the episcopate of a Missionary Diocese, on account of death, resignation, or other cause, the Standing Committee shall become the Ecclesiastical Authority thereof until the vacancy is filled.

~~**In the event of a vacancy in the office of Bishop assigned jurisdiction in an Area Mission, the charge thereof shall devolve upon the Presiding Bishop, with the power of appointing some other Bishop as his substitute in such charge, until the vacancy is filled by the House of Bishops;**~~ and be it further

Resolved, That Canon I.11.2 is hereby amended to add a new subsection:

(g) In the event of a vacancy in the office of Bishop assigned jurisdiction in an Area Mission, the charge thereof shall devolve upon the Presiding Bishop, with the power of appointing some other Bishop as his substitute in such charge, until the vacancy is filled by the House of Bishops.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Columbus, 2006* (New York: General Convention, 2007), p. 684.



Resolution Number: 2000-A129
Title: Direct the Executive Council to Develop Relationships with Overseas Dioceses
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 2000 General Convention commend to Executive Council the efforts of the Consultation on Autonomy held in October 1999 by the Standing Commission on World Mission with autonomous jurisdictions that were formerly part of the Episcopal Church, namely, the Episcopal Anglican Church of Brazil, the Anglican Church of Central America, the Episcopal Diocese of Liberia (now a member of the Province of West Africa), the Anglican Church of Mexico, and the Episcopal Church in the Philippines; and be it further

Resolved, That this Convention direct Executive Council to honor the Church's continuing covenants and agreements with jurisdictions of the Anglican Communion that were formerly part of the Episcopal Church to ensure that all of the Episcopal Church's responsibilities under the covenants are carried out and that the Church work in companionship with them to carry out God's mission; and be it further

Resolved, That this Convention direct Executive Council to nurture companionship with the Church's present overseas jurisdictions - namely, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Haiti, Honduras, Litoral, Taiwan, the Virgin Islands, Convocation of American Churches in Europe, and the Church in Micronesia - to ensure growth toward maturity among all participants and including ECUSA; and be it further

Resolved, That this Convention direct Executive Council to set long-range financial goals for the portion of the program budget devoted to overseas ECUSA jurisdictions; develop and publicize a plan for meeting such goals; and determine the feasibility of a "campaign for autonomy" that would avoid the need for lengthy covenant commitments if and when autonomy is undertaken by any overseas jurisdictions; and be it further

Resolved, That this Convention direct Executive Council to include the Church's overseas jurisdictions in all communications planning and programming, especially electronic communications; and to prepare a plan in consultation with the Companion diocesan network to encourage companion relationships with geographically distant overseas jurisdictions and provinces; and be it further

Resolved, That this Convention direct Executive Council to ensure that all Executive Council members are briefed thoroughly at least once a year on the status of overseas ECUSA jurisdictions, autonomy processes being undertaken by ECUSA jurisdictions and covenants with autonomous jurisdictions formerly part of ECUSA; and be it further

Resolved, That this Convention direct Executive Council to ensure that overseas ECUSA dioceses are effectively represented on decision-making bodies of the Church and that the decision-making bodies of ECUSA continue to seek the perspectives of the jurisdictions formerly part of ECUSA.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Denver, 2000* (New York: General Convention, 2001), p. 533f.



Resolution Number: 1979-C042
Title: Amend Canon I.10 [Add Sec. 3(b): Transfer of Area Missions] and Renumber Accordingly
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred As Substituted and Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That Title I, Canon 10 be amended to include a new Section 3(b) as follows:

3(b). In the event a Missionary Diocese beyond the territory of the United States of America is incapable of functioning as a jurisdiction in union with the Episcopal Church, and the Bishop, or if there be none, the Ecclesiastical Authority, of such Diocese, after consultation with appropriate diocesan authorities, and the Presiding Bishop agree that continuation with this Church is no longer feasible, the Presiding Bishop is authorized, after consultation with the appropriate authorities in the Anglican Communion, to take such action as needed for such Diocese to become a constituent part of another Province or Regional Council in communion with this Church; and be it further

Resolved, That the remaining Sections of Title I, Canon 10 be renumbered accordingly.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Denver, 1979* (New York: General Convention, 1980), p. C-149.



Resolution Number: 1973-A059
Title: Adopt a New Canon I.10 [Of Missionary Jurisdictions]
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred
Final Text:

Resolved, That a new Canon I. 10 be adopted, to be entitled "Of Missionary Jurisdictions", and to read as follows:

Canon 10. Of Missionary Jurisdictions.

Sec. 1. Area Missions established in accordance with Article VI., Sec. 1, and Missionary Dioceses organized in accordance with Article VI., Sec. 3, shall constitute jurisdictions for which this Church as a whole assumes a special responsibility.

Sec. 2(a). The House of Bishops may establish a Mission in any Area not included within the boundaries of a Diocese of this Church, or of a Church in communion with this Church, under such conditions and agreements, not inconsistent with the Constitution and Canons of this Church, as shall be approved by the House of Bishops from time to time.

(b) Such Area Mission may be undertaken under the sole auspices of this Church, or it may be undertaken jointly with another Christian body or bodies, on such terms as shall not compromise the doctrines of the Christian faith as this Church has received the same.

(c) For every such Area Mission, a Bishop of this Church, or of a Church in communion with this Church, shall be assigned by the House of Bishops to give episcopal oversight. If the person so assigned be a Bishop of this Church, he shall, for the duration of such assignment, exercise jurisdiction as a Missionary Bishop under these Canons, so far as they are applicable to the Area Mission; and should occasion arise for the function of a Standing Committee or a Commission on Ministry, he shall appoint a board or boards of clergymen and lay persons resident in the area, to fulfil such functions as may be required.

(d) Except as may be expressly provided otherwise in the agreements referred to in paragraph (a) of this Section, the Bishop having jurisdiction in an Area Mission may authorize the use of such forms of worship as he may judge appropriate to the circumstances.

(e) An Area Mission may be terminated by the House of Bishops as a mission of this Church; or it may be transferred by them to become a mission of another Church, or to become a constituent part of an autonomous Province in communion with this Church; or it may organize itself as an extra-provincial Diocese.

Sec. 3(a). An Area not previously organized as a Diocese, and not under the permanent jurisdiction of a Bishop in communion with this Church, may, upon application for admission, in accordance with the procedures of Article V., Sec. 1, be admitted as a Missionary Diocese within the meaning of Sec. 1 of this Canon. Such Missionary Diocese, and every present Missionary Diocese organized by the House of Bishops under previously existing Canons and admitted into union with the General Convention, shall be governed by a Constitution and Canons, adopted by the Convention of the said Diocese, which acknowledge the authority of the Constitution and Canons of the General Convention, and incorporate the provisions set forth in the subsequent paragraphs of this section.

(b) In every Missionary Diocese there shall be an annual Convention, composed of the Bishop or Bishops, the other Clergy of the Diocese, and Lay Delegates from the organized Congregations. Such Convention shall elect a Standing Committee, in accordance with the diocesan Canons, which shall have the powers and duties set forth for Standing Committees

in Canon I.11 and in other Canons of the General Convention. It shall also elect Clerical and Lay Deputies and Alternate Deputies to the General Convention, in accordance with its diocesan Canons, and the provisions of Article 1.4 of the Constitution. If the Missionary Diocese is a member of a Province of this Church, it shall also provide for Clerical and Lay Deputies and alternate Deputies to the Synod, in accordance with the diocesan Canons and the provisions of the Ordinances of the Province.

(c) The Convention of a Missionary Diocese shall also adopt an annual budget and program for the Diocese, and provide for the means of its administration throughout the year; and shall make provision for the review and approval of requests for grants in aid from the Executive Council or other sources of funds, both toward current operations and for capital needs.

(d) The election of the Bishop of a Missionary Diocese in the event of a vacancy, or, when canonical consent is given, the election of a person to be Bishop Coadjutor or Suffragan Bishop, shall be made by a Diocesan Convention in accordance with its own Canons, and the provisions of Canons 111.14 and III.15 of the General Convention.

(e) At the request of the Convention of a Missionary Diocese, supported by the presentation of relevant facts and a feasible plan, the General Convention may by joint Resolution (1) grant autonomy to the said Diocese as an extra-provincial Diocese, or (2) transfer it to another autonomous province or Regional Council of Churches in communion with this Church.

(f) At the request of the Convention of a Missionary Diocese, accompanied by the Bishop's written resignation of his permanent jurisdiction therein, the General Convention may alter the status of a Missionary Diocese to that of an Area Mission, under such terms and conditions as may be stipulated by the House of Bishops in accordance with Canon I.10.2(a); and in such case its right to representation by Deputies in the General Convention and Provincial Synod shall cease.

Sec. 4. Notice shall be sent to all Archbishops and Metropolitans, and all Presiding Bishops, of Churches in communion with this Church, of the establishment of any Area Mission, or of the organization or change of status of any Missionary Diocese outside the United States; and of the consecration, or assignment, of a Missionary Bishop therefor. It is hereby declared as the judgment of this Church that no two Bishops of Churches in communion with each other should exercise jurisdiction in the same place; except as may be defined by a concordat adopted jointly by the competent authority of each of the said Churches, after consultation with the appropriate inter-Anglican body.

Citation: General Convention, Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Louisville, 1973 (New York: General Convention, 1973), pp. 317-319.