

General Convention of The Episcopal Church 2024 Archives' Research Report

Resolution No.: 2024-D044
Title: Task Force on Church Property Development
Proposer: Olson, The Rev. Canon Britt
Topic: Church Property, Evangelism, Structure

Directly Related: (Attached)

2022-A095 Celebrate and Support the Planting of New Episcopal Communities
2022-A096 Develop Sustainable Congregational Revitalization Ministries
2018-A005 Support Network of Planting Congregations
2018-A032 Create a Task Force on Congregational Redevelopment and Mission
2018-D053 Call for Model Policies for Sustainable Church Land Use
2015-A003 On the Topic of Using Church Buildings for Other Purposes (Rejected)
2006-A042 Establish a Church Planting Initiative
1997-A084 Fund Full-time Position for Congregational Development
1997-A085 Urge Dioceses to Prepare Strategies for Congregational Development
1991-A063 Develop a Comprehensive Strategy for New Congregational Development
1991-A064 Establish Educational Opportunities for New Congregational Development
1988-D149 Request a Format for Evaluating and Networking Small Congregations
1979-A063 Reaffirm Congregations as the Center of Mission
1979-C031 Encourage Church Involvement in Community Economic Redevelopment
1979-D017 Ask Dioceses to Combine Resources That Assist Congregational Growth

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

2018-A058 Call for Completion of Episcopal Asset Map Profile
2015-A030 Support Ecologically Responsible Stewardship of Church Property
2009-A062 Gather Data on Missional and Emergent Congregations and Church Outreach

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](#).

D044 - Task Force on Church Property Development

Final Status: Not Yet Finalized

Proposed by: Olson, The Rev. Canon Britt

Endorsed by: Curlin, Ms. Laura, Baer, The Rev. Tim

Has Budget Implications: Yes

Cost: \$30,000.00

Amends C&C or Rules of Order: No

Requests New Interim Body: Yes

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: No

Resolution Text

Resolved, the House of _____ concurring,

That the 81st General Convention create the Task Force on Church Property Development, whose mandate is to (1) collect information and resources useful to churches and dioceses considering redevelopment, including success stories from around the church (2) identify any gaps in the information available and hurdles to redevelopment, (3) make recommendations on how to leverage existing church property and financial assets to further the work of mission and ministry, including congregational redevelopment, church planting, and evangelism, and (4) propose or establish a group, network, or para-church organization that can assist churches in future efforts; and be it further

Resolved, That the Task Force begin its work no later than January 1, 2025, with the Task Force concluding its work at the conclusion of the 82nd General Convention, unless its mandate is extended by the 82nd Convention; and be it further

Resolved, That this Task Force be appointed jointly by the Presiding Officers, with 12 members, 3 of whom shall be bishops, 4 of whom shall be clergy, and 5 lay persons, including members with experience in the development of church property, church planting, and entrepreneurial ministry; and be it further

Resolved, That the Episcopal Church Building Fund, Trinity Wall Street Mission Real Estate and Development (MRED), and Episcopal Parish Network shall each appoint a representative to serve as a consultant to the Task Force; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention request that the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget and Finance consider a budget allocation of \$30,000 for the implementation of this resolution.

Explanation

Decline in membership, aging facilities, deferred maintenance, and increasing costs for personnel all require the church to be more creative, imaginative, and wise in the stewardship of our land and property. This resolution seeks to further the conversation and resources available so that we can be good stewards of our property and maximize the assets available for the mission and ministry of the church, rather than acting from a mindset of fear and scarcity. The Task Force's work should make it easier for congregations to consider how to generate revenue to support ministry, create missional partnerships (i.e. affordable housing), and creatively use their property and buildings to further their ministry.

Information and resources to guide decisions about church property are sparse, and conversations on this topic are often siloed. Congregations and dioceses often take on these challenges on their own, often without past experience or expertise in real estate and development. A coordinated repository of resources will make it easier for lay and clergy leaders to make informed and empowered decisions. A clearer understanding of options and processes, and how they intersect with the values of The Episcopal Church, will make it easier to plan for the future. This Task Force will gather information and resources at regional and churchwide levels so this work can be done more efficiently and effectively.

We hope this resolution also calls dioceses to be thoughtful in land banking property for new churches and in the use of revenues when a church or property is sold. Rather than putting those assets into operating funds, they could be thoughtfully invested for the long term mission of the future church. By highlighting successes and sharing information, this Task Force can support creative visions for the church of the future.



Resolution Number: 2022-A095
Title: Celebrate and Support the Planting of New Episcopal Communities
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 80th General Convention and the Episcopal Church celebrates and supports the planting of new congregations and ministries, the training and recruiting of planters and mission developers, and the fostering of a church-wide network of support for new ministry development that was originally funded by 2018-A005 and 2018-A032; and be it further

Resolved, That the Church continues to prioritize establishing new Episcopal communities and strengthening existing ones that are especially committed to mission and evangelism engaging people historically underserved and/or under-represented by the Church, for example, people of color, immigrants and refugees, youth, young adults, people who are gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender (LGBTQI+), gender non-conforming people, people living in poverty, people with disabilities and/or all others who are disenfranchised from the Church; and be it further

Resolved, That the budget for sustaining this new ministry development will be \$5,800,000.00 for 2022-2024 to be allocated as follows:

- **\$200,000 to identify and support existing programs to train clergy and lay leaders in planting congregations**
- **\$600,000 to provide mentorship/coaching/training for planters of congregations**
- **\$1,000,000 for the continuing development and implementation of a program to train bilingual/bi-cultural lay and ordained leaders in church planting for various cultural contexts**
- **\$500,000 to support a church-wide office staff person to oversee the planting network.**
- **\$3,000,000 for grants to new and existing church plants, to be administered by the Task Force for Church Planting in consultation with the Churchwide Office Staff Officer for church planting.**
- **\$500,000 for the support of leadership development programs for the next generation of church planters and ministry developers;**

And be it further

Resolved, That the Convention urges The Episcopal Church Development Office establish an advisory group to study the possibility of creating an endowment for church plants and evangelism; and be it further

Resolved, That Dioceses receiving money for planting new congregations under this program will be required to contribute significant, resource appropriate, and local funding to support the costs of any new plants; and be it further

Resolved, That the bishop or a diocesan advocate representing any diocese receiving funds shall take part in a cohort of church planting dioceses engaged in church planting and evangelism to share best practices and methods of supporting mission developers. Those dioceses not receiving grant funds are also invited to participate in the diocesan cohort; and be it further

Resolved, That this Convention embrace the future of our Church by, after this Triennia, moving the funding for a church-wide office staff-person to oversee the planting network (Staff Officer for Church Planting) into the continuing budget for the Presiding Bishop's staff; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention request Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget and Finance consider a budget allocation of \$5,800,000 for the implementation of this resolution.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Baltimore, 2022* (New York: General Convention, 2023), pp. 774-775.



Resolution Number: 2022-A096
Title: Develop Sustainable Congregational Revitalization Ministries
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 80th General Convention and the Episcopal Church celebrates and actively supports the revitalization of congregations, seeking not to restore past glories, but to move into the new callings of our loving, liberating, life-giving God; and be it further

Resolved, That the Church continues to prioritize the revitalization of congregations and a church-wide network of support for congregational revitalization work that was initiated by 2018-A032; and be it further

Resolved, That the Presiding Bishop and President of the House of Deputies establish an advisory group of not more than twelve (12) people, consisting of those with experience in revitalizing congregations, diocesan oversight of such work, working with evangelism and mission, to carry out provisions of this resolution, including making recommendations to Executive Council about grants to be awarded, helping to identify potential revitalizers, and developing a network of coaches, and working with staff on training church revitalizers; and be it further

Resolved, That in the revitalization of congregations, the Church continues to prioritize commitment to mission and evangelism engaging people historically underserved and/or under-represented by the Church, for example, people of color, immigrants and refugees, youth, young adults, people who are gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender (LGBTQI+), gender non-conforming people, people living in poverty, people with disabilities and/or all others who are disenfranchised from the Church; and be it further; and be it further

Resolved, That the budget for development of sustainable congregational revitalization throughout the Church will be \$2,000,000 for 2022-2024 to be allocated as follows:

- **\$100,000 to engage Bishops and the diocesan representative(s) they appoint in development of a framework for congregational revitalization, identifying roadblocks that regularly thwart this work and identifying resources that are proven to enhance this work;**
- **\$100,000 to engage clergy and lay leaders in gleaning learnings from congregational revitalization that they have successfully done and/or they have failed in attempts to do, identifying roadblocks that have thwarted their work and identifying resources that have enhanced their work;**
- **\$100,000 for translation services and to facilitate participation of Spanish-speaking lay and ordained leaders in training for congregational revitalization;**
- **\$200,000 for further development of five-phase congregational redevelopment strategy - (1) diagnosing/assessing resources and challenges, (2) discerning next calling, (3) connecting with local and diocesan partners, (4) iterating and continued resourcing, and (5) evaluating, refining and sustaining**
- **\$1,000,000 to support a team of local and regional church-wide office staff to oversee the work; and**
- **\$500,000 to provide mentorship/coaching/training for lay and ordained leaders in revitalization of their congregations.**

And be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention request the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget and Finance to consider a budget allocation of \$2,000,000 for the implementation of this resolution.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Baltimore, 2022* (New York: General Convention, 2023), pp. 773-774.



Resolution Number: 2018-A005
Title: Support Network of Planting Congregations
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 79th General Convention and the Episcopal Church celebrate and strategically support emerging communities through the good work initiated by GC2015 – D005 and A012 to develop a church-wide network for planting congregations, training and recruiting planters and mission developers; and establishing new congregations or mission enterprise zones each triennium that are especially committed to mission and evangelism that engages under-represented groups, including youth and young adults, differently abled persons, people identifying as members of LGBTQIA+ communities, people of color, poor and working-class people, people with a high-school diploma or less, and/or people with little or no church background or involvement; and be it further

Resolved, That the Church honors the holy experiments emerging throughout the Church – experiments that build partnerships within and beyond the church, expand the language of ministry, create new ways to engage the people of God, harvest and share learnings, and lend courage to those leading new ministries and lower the cost of failure through a network supporting mission development; and be it further

Resolved, That the budget for sustaining this church planting network will be \$5,800,000.00 for 2019-2021 to be allocated as follows:

\$200,000 to identify and support existing programs to produce training in planting congregations for clergy and lay leaders

\$600,000 to provide resources for planters of congregations

\$1,000,000 for the development and implementation of a program to train bilingual/bi-cultural lay and ordained leaders in church planting for various cultural contexts

\$500,000 to support a staff person to oversee the planting network

\$3,000,000 for grants to support congregations with the grant depending on the context and need of the congregation; and be it further

\$500,000 in matching funds for the support of leadership development programs for the next generation of church planters and ministry developers;

And be it further

Resolved, That the Convention urges The Episcopal Church Development Office to prioritize raising \$6 million per triennium to plant new congregations, so that a network of interested donors will be developed; and be it further

Resolved, That Dioceses receiving money for planting new congregations under this program will contribute significant, resource appropriate, and local funding to support the costs of any new plants; and be it further

Resolved, That the bishop or a diocesan advocate representing any diocese receiving funds shall take part in a cohort of church planting dioceses to share best practices and methods of supporting mission developers, as we all are learning how to nurture new ministries that challenge our assumptions about how to share the gospel with new cultures and generations,

and that dioceses not receiving grant funds are also invited to participate in the diocesan cohort; and be it further

Resolved, the Presiding Bishop and President of the House of Deputies continue the advisory group of not more than twelve (12) people, consisting of those with experience in planting congregations, diocesan oversight of such work, working with evangelism and mission, to carry out provisions of this resolution, including making recommendations to Executive Council about grants to be awarded, helping to identify potential planters, and continuing to develop a network of coaches, and working with staff on training church planters; and be it further

Resolved, That the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget and Finance consider a budget allocation of \$5,800,000 for the implementation of this resolution.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Austin, 2018* (New York: General Convention, 2018), pp. 1052-1053.



Resolution Number: 2018-A032
Title: Create a Task Force on Congregational Redevelopment and Mission
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 79th General Convention requests that the Presiding Bishop and the President of the House of Deputies in consultation with the Church Center staff create a church-wide Community of Practice that works with congregations and their bishops to help them redevelop to better engage the cultural realities of their communities for the sake of launching new ministries and multi-cultural missional initiatives; and be it further

Resolved, That the Communications Office be directed to make a priority of reporting on the stories of redeveloped congregations on an ongoing basis through news media, video, and other means and through developing online resources that provide detailed information about the redevelopment efforts happening throughout the church; and be it further

Resolved, That the cost of this initiative will be equally shared by the church-wide budget, participating dioceses and redeveloping congregations; and be it further

Resolved, That the presiding officers appoint a task force to coordinate this initiative in collaboration with Church Center staff. That task force may be combined with a task force on Church Planting and Missional Initiatives at the discretion of the presiding officers; and be it further

Resolved, That the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget and Finance consider a budget allocation of \$725,000 during the triennium for the implementation of this resolution.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Austin, 2018* (New York: General Convention, 2018), pp. 542-543.



Resolution Number: 2018-D053
Title: Call for Model Policies for Sustainable Church Land Use
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 79th General Convention recommends that all dioceses, faith communities and institutions create partnerships enabling the use of church-owned land for regenerative agriculture and biodiversity conservation projects in order to sequester carbon and to mitigate climate change; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention direct the Executive Council to appoint a body to gather information from the Church Pension Group, dioceses and other sources in order to create an inventory of all church-owned properties; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention requests that each Diocese consider the potential for utilization of church-owned property for new ministries integrating the care of Creation, particularly in situations where properties are no longer regularly utilized; and be it further

Resolved, That the body appointed by Executive Council develop model processes by which dioceses, faith communities and institutions may collaborate with partner agencies to care for creation and sequester carbon through regenerative agriculture, biodiversity conservation, green burial, and habitat restoration; and be it further

Resolved, That the appointed body report back to the 80th General Convention.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Austin, 2018* (New York: General Convention, 2018), pp. 686-687.



Resolution Number: 2015-A003
Title: On the Topic of Using Church Buildings for Other Purposes
Legislative Action Taken: Rejected
Final Text:

Resolution Rejected. See Legislative History for original text of resolution.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Salt Lake City, 2015* (New York: General Convention, 2015), pp. 614-615.



Resolution Number: 2006-A042
Title: Establish a Church Planting Initiative
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Substituted and Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 75th General Convention establish a Church Planting Initiative to raise funds for new congregations in the dioceses of this Church; and be it further

Resolved, That the 75th General Convention call every diocese of this Church to identify and document with projected costs and demographics including racial, ethnic, generational, and socioeconomic makeup of the targeted areas, prime opportunities for the development of new congregations including new college campus missions, and communicate this list of opportunities to the Office of Congregational Development by June 30, 2007; and be it further

Resolved, That the Office of Congregational Development be directed to assemble these reports by December 30, 2007, and convey to Executive Council, in its regular report a comprehensive list of opportunities for new church and campus ministry development and projected costs, and to communicate this list through electronic and print media to the Church; and be it further

Resolved, That upon receipt of the comprehensive report for New Church Development the Presiding Bishop and the Executive Council implement a major gifts campaign to fund the Church Planting Initiative; and be it further

Resolved, That the Office of Congregational Development in cooperation with the Ethnic Ministries offices, especially the Hispanic Ministries Office, lead and support the Church Planting Initiative by: keeping the church abreast of best practices for church, campus mission and ministry planting; raising awareness of opportunities for starting new congregations, campus mission and ministries throughout the church; assisting individual dioceses in planning and developing a vision and a plan for this Initiative; developing tools for assessing candidates for new church development; and recommending matching grants for church planting; and be it further

Resolved, That The Episcopal Church be a financial partner with dioceses by providing matching grants to dioceses for church planting; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention direct the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget, and Finance to consider the Church Planting Initiative budget for development staff to identify and nurture new sources of revenue in the grants, gifts, endowments and/or capital fund drives be increased from \$75,000 to \$475,000 during each year of the 2007–2009 triennium.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Columbus, 2006* (New York: General Convention, 2007), pp. 655-656.



Resolution Number: 1997-A084
Title: Fund Full-time Position for Congregational Development
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred
Final Text:

Resolved, That the Executive Council assure the funding and staffing of a full-time position in the area of congregational development in the 1998-2000 triennium; and be it further Resolved, That among the responsibilities to be executed by this position shall be to: develop, compile, and distribute resources focused on new and imaginative ways of achieving congregational transformation; and assist the formation and nurture of networks among dioceses, organizations, and congregations.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Philadelphia, 1997* (New York: General Convention, 1998), p. 185.



Resolution Number: 1997-A085
Title: Urge Dioceses to Prepare Strategies for Congregational Development
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That this 72nd General Convention urge and encourage dioceses with metropolitan areas to prepare overall and intentional strategies for congregational development that:

- foster networks with other dioceses, within dioceses themselves, and with ecumenical entities, to learn, reflect and build on mutual experiences;
- utilize effective resources and organization for congregational leadership development;
- discover and affirm existing models of faithful and effective congregational ministries, including the Jubilee Ministries model; and
- commit to the regard for and inclusion of the racial and ethnic diversity represented by communities and individuals within metropolitan areas.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Philadelphia, 1997* (New York: General Convention, 1998), p. 61.



Resolution Number: 1991-A063
Title: Develop a Comprehensive Strategy for New Congregational Development
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred As Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That through the action of its 70th General Convention the Episcopal Church commit itself to develop and promote a more comprehensive mission strategy for new congregation development which will include both ethnic specific models as well as multi-cultural models; both of these types of new congregations should be pursued at a variety of socio-economic levels; and be it further

Resolved, That each diocese be encouraged to continue developing and implementing its own strategies for new congregations, including ethnic specific and multi-cultural models at a variety of socio-economic levels; and be it further

Resolved, That congregations, dioceses and the National Church be encouraged to publicize the results of such strategies.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Phoenix, 1991* (New York: General Convention, 1992), p. 398.



Resolution Number: 1991-A064
Title: Establish Educational Opportunities for New Congregational Development
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred As Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 70th General Convention of the Episcopal Church direct the Board for Theological Education in conjunction with the National Committee on Congregational Development, the Council for the Development of Ministry, and the Council of Seminary Deans to establish new means for the education of persons recruited for the specialized area of new congregational development and the redevelopment of congregations in transition, assuring that these educational opportunities include ethnic, rural and cross cultural mission emphases; and be it further

Resolved, That these groups report the results of their work to the 71st General Convention.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Phoenix, 1991* (New York: General Convention, 1992), p. 396.



Resolution Number: 1988-D149
Title: Request a Format for Evaluating and Networking Small Congregations
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred As Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the Standing Commission for Church in Small Communities be requested to develop a format for evaluating small congregations to be used in assisting them and their dioceses in planning for the future growth and development so as to best use their resources and personnel for mission strategy; and be it further

Resolved, That the Standing Commission for Church in Small Communities and the Office of Rural and Small Town Ministry develop a network for the exchange of information and strategy among dioceses and the congregations throughout the church.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Detroit, 1988* (New York: General Convention, 1989), p. 297.



Resolution Number: 1979-A063
Title: Reaffirm Congregations as the Center of Mission
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred As Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That:

The Church, in its next triennium, set as one of its prime goals a strengthened Christian presence in the cities and other areas of deprivation;

We reaffirm and enable the local congregation as the primary locus of mission for evangelism and ministry, including Christian social ministries. This would mean that a major portion of funding for social programs would be directed to assisting the mission of such congregations so that they, together with other Christians and people of good will, may become advocates for social ministries for the Church;

This Convention shall call upon its Executive Council, all provinces, Dioceses and congregations to join in a new commitment to mission to and advocacy for those whose needs are greatest; and

The Church at all of these levels, including Venture in Mission, scrutinize and establish as a high claim on its financial resources the fulfilling of this divine imperative.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Denver, 1979* (New York: General Convention, 1980), p. C-128.



Resolution Number: 1979-C031
Title: Encourage Church Involvement in Community Economic
Redevelopment
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 66th General Convention of the Episcopal Church endorse and encourage the involvement of the Church at local and diocesan levels in efforts to conserve and rebuild the cities of the nation through community economic redevelopment, and in efforts to restore the communities' access to those resources and control over their use which will enable them to provide for the general welfare of their populace; and be it further

Resolved, that this Convention urge Parishes and Dioceses to develop patterns of use of Church investments and property in support of local economic development projects, to involve those of its members who are participants in the economic community in creative dialogue concerning urban development needs and the moral and ethical dimensions of the new international economy and its impact on older industrial communities.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Denver, 1979* (New York: General Convention, 1980), p. C-102.



Resolution Number: 1979-D017
Title: Ask Dioceses to Combine Resources That Assist Congregational Growth
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred As Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That in each Diocese of the Church those responsible for evangelism and renewal and those responsible for mission and aided congregations find ways to collaborate in the growth of disciples in mission congregations, in the formation of new congregations, and in the renewal of aided congregations and congregations in changing neighborhoods.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Denver, 1979* (New York: General Convention, 1980), p. C-64.