

2018 Resolution R4: Resolution on the Implementation of Title III, CANON 1

Resolved, that this 126th Annual Council of the Episcopal Diocese of Southern Virginia approves the following resolution for submission to the 2018 [or 79th] General Convention of the Episcopal Church:

Be it further resolved, that the House of _____ concurring, that the 79th General Convention, in recognition of the Jesus Movement and the calling of all the baptized in their daily life and work, appoint a task force to study the implementation of

Title III, CANON 1: Of the Ministry of All Baptized Persons which reads:
Sec. 1. Each Diocese shall make provision for the affirmation and development of the ministry of all baptized persons, including: (a) Assistance in understanding that all baptized persons are called to minister in Christ's name, to identify their gifts with the help of the Church and to serve Christ's mission at all times and in all places. (b) Assistance in understanding that all baptized persons are called to sustain their ministries through commitment to life-long Christian formation.

And be it further resolved that such task force be appointed by the Presiding Officers jointly and that a report be given to the 80th General Convention with its recommendations for the implementation of Title III, CANON 1 in all parishes, dioceses, provinces, and the wider church, focusing on full engagement of all the Baptized in their ministries beyond Sunday in their daily life, work, and leisure.

Rationale:

Title III Canon 1 has been underutilized. For example, few dioceses have a Commission on Lay Ministry or its equivalent that focuses on empowering all the Baptized in their daily life. This resolution seeks to provide a remedy. The Canon calls on The Episcopal Church to "equip the saints for ministry" (Ephesians 4). Adopted in 2003, it provides the skeleton that now needs to be enlivened. In the Catechism under The Ministry (BCP 855) the first order of ministry is lay persons. They represent the 99 % of The Episcopal Church. The Baptismal Covenant (BCP 304-5) is the "job description" for all the baptized in their respective orders. This is further affirmed in both the Ordination Services of Bishop and Priest respectively: to "encourage and support all baptized people in their gifts and ministries"; and, "laboring together with (all whom called to serve) and fellow ministers to build the family of God." This task force's work is to recommend processes so that the church can affirm the calling of all the baptized, especially its lay persons, and empower them in all the areas of their ministry in work, home, community, and wider world as well as in the Church.

Respectfully and Faithfully Submitted,

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