

# RESOLUTIONS TO THE DIOCESAN CONVENTION

## JOINT RESOLUTIONS

### RESOLUTION 1 -

#### **A Joint Resolution Calling for the Creation of an Assisting Bishop Position in the Dioceses of Eastern and Western Michigan**

*Whereas*, we highly value the deepening relationship between our dioceses and hope to continue finding ways to creatively share resources and ministry so that the Good News of Jesus Christ may be effectively proclaimed in congregations that are healthy, mission-focused, and led by faithful lay and clergy leaders; and

*Whereas*, both our dioceses are seeking faithfulness in times marked by economic uncertainty, political unrest, racial injustice, a global pandemic, and a cultural context which calls for a bold and unified message of God's love; and

*Whereas*, we also affirm, as dioceses of The Episcopal Church, the teaching of our prayer book (BCP 855) that Christian ministry is most fully exercised by clergy and laity joined with the sacramental and apostolic leadership of a bishop; and

*Whereas*, we uphold and respect the decision of the Standing Committees to retain the ecclesiastical authority during the suspension of our Bishop; and

*Whereas*, at a Joint Standing Committee meeting on August 31, 2020 the Standing Committees of the Dioceses of Eastern and Western Michigan voted to appoint a part-time Visiting Bishop; and the Standing Committees of Eastern and Western MI, acting jointly, ask the joint convention of our dioceses to create the position of a part-time Assisting Bishop for the Dioceses of Eastern and Western Michigan; therefore be it

*Resolved*, that this Joint Convention of the Episcopal Dioceses of Eastern and Western Michigan create the position of a part-time Assisting Bishop, in accordance with Title III, Canon 12.9 (m) of the Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church, who will serve both dioceses with primary roles of teaching, preaching, pastoral care particularly to the clergy, providing sacramental rites, and advising the Standing Committees; and be it further

*Resolved*, that our Joint Convention urge the Standing Committees, under their authority as the Ecclesiastical Authority of each Diocese, to appoint the current Visiting Bishop to the position of Assisting Bishop; and be it further

*Resolved*, that the Joint Standing Committees, as allowed by Canon, determine the work to be done by the Assisting Bishop and the ecclesiastical authority to be delegated to him or her, if any; and be it further

*Resolved*, that the Assisting Bishop's tenure shall continue until our dioceses have made a godly decision with regard to our future relationship with our current Bishop, with the possibility of the Assisting Bishop either being a shepherd to us in reconciliation with our Bishop or as a guide in a faithful separation from him and discernment of new beginnings for the Episcopal Church in the Dioceses of Eastern and Western Michigan.

#### **Rationale:**

- We believe that, an Assisting Bishop could provide wise counsel and leadership in this tumultuous time and serve as a helpful advisor to our Standing Committees, augmenting, and supporting their leadership. This is in no way a denigration of the leadership of any other order of ministry, nor a claim for the superiority of the episcopate. Rather, it is an affirmation of St. Paul's words in Romans 12, "We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us." We believe the distinctive gifts of a bishop are needed at this time in our shared life.
- We acknowledge our strong laity, deacons, and priests who provide leadership in exemplary ways as The Episcopal Church in Eastern and Western Michigan. Still, our governance and ecclesiology envision the focused care, oversight, and direction for ministry by a Bishop.
- Canon III.12.9(m) indicates that, in the absence of a Bishop Diocesan, the Standing Committee can make this invitation: "(m) Assisting Bishops are those bishops whose primary roles are teaching, preaching or providing sacramental rites at the invitation of the Ecclesiastical Authority of the diocese where the Assisting Bishop has been invited to participate for particular times and places."
- We believe the Holy Spirit is active in our diocesan leadership, guiding our clergy and lay leaders. We have seen that activity, particularly in the increased shared ministries between the two Dioceses. We believe an Assisting Bishop can enable us to walk through the path ahead of us with grace, faithfulness, and a strong commitment to being the Body of Christ in our time.

#### **Resolution Signatories**

##### *The Standing Committee of Eastern Michigan*

Janet Huff-Worvie (President; St. John's, Otter Lake), the Rev. Brian Chace (Vice-President; Trinity, West Branch), the Rev. Dan Scheid (St. Paul's, Flint), the Rev. Lydia Speller (Grace, Port Huron), Gary Grinn (Secretary; St. Paul's, Gladwin), Bill Thewalt (St. Christopher's, Grand Blanc).

*The Standing Committee of Western Michigan*

Dave Croal (President; St. Mark's, Coldwater), Anne Davidson (St. Mark's, Coldwater), Carole Redwine (St. Philip's, Grand Rapids), the Rev. BJ Heyboer (Secretary; St. Mark's, Newaygo), the Rev. Jodi Baron (St. Philip's, Beulah; Holy Trinity, Manistee), the Rev. Diane Pike (Southwest Michigan Episcopal Covenant - Dowagiac, Niles, St. Joseph), Martha Bartlett (St. James, Pentwater), the Rev. Dr. Randall Warren (Vice-President; St. Luke's, Kalamazoo).

*Eastern Michigan Clergy*

The Rev. Heather Barta, The Rev. Judi Boli (St. Paul's, Saginaw), The Rev. Ann Grady (St. Christopher's, Grand Blanc), The Rev. Mary Jo Hudson (St. Matthew's, Saginaw), The Rev. Thomas Manney (St. Paul's, Bad Axe and St. John's, Dryden), The Rev. Curt Norman (St. John's, Saginaw), The Rev. Pam Renna (St. John's, Saginaw).

*Eastern Michigan Laity*

Mary Baukus (St. John's, Saginaw), Kathryn Coman (St. John's, Saginaw), Angela Campbell (St. Christopher's, Grand Blanc), Marcia Hoffman (St. John's, Saginaw), Melanie Hollman (St. John's, Saginaw).

*Western Michigan Clergy*

The Rev. Molly Bosscher (St. Andrew's, Grand Rapids), The Rev. Brian Coleman (St. Thomas, Battle Creek), The Rev. Dr. Jared Cramer (St. John's, Grand Haven), The Rev. Beth Drew (Trinity, Three Rivers), The Rev. Paula Durren (Retired), The Rev. Michael Fedewa (St. Paul's, Muskegon), The Rev. John Hills (Retired), The Rev. Dr. David Meyers (St. Peter's-by-the-Lake, Montague), The Rev. Nurya Love Parish (Plainsong Farm, Rockford, Holy Spirit, Belmont), The Rev. LaRae Rutenbar (Retired), The Rev. Anne Schnaare (Trinity, Marshall), The Rev. Thomas Scott (Retired);, The Rev. Joel Turmo (St. Timothy's, Richland)

*Western Michigan Laity*

Alicia Hager (St. John's, Grand Haven), Trish Harris (St. Thomas, Battle Creek), Karen Nisja (St. John's, Grand Haven), Karen Keese (St. Thomas, Battle Creek), Kathryn Dingwall (St. Thomas, Battle Creek)

## RESOLUTION 2 -

### A Joint Resolution Calling for Racial Healing and Equity

The Dioceses of Eastern and Western Michigan resolve and affirm that Black Lives Matter.

#### **Rationale:**

Genesis 1:26-27 states that God created all of humanity in the divine image and bestows dignity upon all. God promises to redeem, reconcile, and restore the whole creation through Christ. When Black lives are treated as though they don't matter, Christians everywhere should be able to stand up and assert without hesitation that Black lives certainly do matter, have dignity, worth, and value. God created Black people in God's image. God redeems Black lives in Christ. Black lives matter to God.

#### *Eastern Michigan Clergy*

The Rev. Brian Chace, ret. Trinity, West Branch; the Rev. Dan Scheid, St. Paul's, Flint; the Rev. Lydia Speller, Grace, Port Huron; the Rev. Ken Hitch, St. John's Midland; the Rev. Canon Michael Spencer, St. Christopher's, Grand Blanc;

#### *Eastern Michigan Laity*

Genevieve Field, St. Paul's, Flint; Joseph Kennedy, St. Paul's, Flint; Sheryl Kennedy, St. Paul's, Flint; Jelecia Ford, St. Paul's, Flint; Audrey Stevens, St. Paul's, Flint; Holly Richardson, St. Paul's, Flint; Rafael McDaniel, St. Paul's, Flint; Rose Duncan, St. Alban's, Bay City; Joan Miska, St. Paul's, Flint; Walt Peake, St. Paul's, Flint; Lisa Hrit, St. Paul's, Flint; Frank Burger, St. Christopher's Grand Blanc; Elizabeth Flusher, St. Paul's, Flint; Meghan Cherry, St. Paul's, Flint; Debbie Bommarito, St. Paul's, Flint; Alexandra Wesley, St. Paul's, Flint; Janet Huff-Worvie, St. John's, Otter Lake; Janet Baker, St. Paul's, Flint;

#### *Western Michigan Clergy*

The Rev. Dr. Brian Coleman, St. Thomas, Battle Creek; the Rev. Joel Turmo, St. Timothy's, Richland; the Rev. Dr. Jared Cramer, St. John's, Grand Haven; the Rev. Jodi Baron, Holy Trinity, Manistee and St. Philip's, Beulah; the Rev. William Fleener, Sr., St. Paul's, Muskegon; the Rev. Diane Pike, Southwest Michigan Covenant; the Rev. Nurya Love Parish, Holy Spirit, Belmont;

#### *Western Michigan Laity*

Yvonne Fleener, St. David's, Lansing; William Fleener, Jr., St. David's, Lansing; Matthew Roney, Grace, Traverse City; Evan Knill, Holy Spirit, Belmont; Judy Fleener, St. Paul's Muskegon;