

## **Structure of the Episcopal Church and Diocese of Indianapolis**

**Resolved**, that the 175<sup>th</sup> Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Indianapolis affirms Resolution C095, Structural Reform, adopted by the 77<sup>th</sup> General Convention of the Episcopal Church; and be it further

**Resolved**, that this Convention urge all members of the Episcopal Diocese of Indianapolis to pray regularly for the guidance of the Holy Spirit to be upon the task force so established for the duration of its work, commending the Prayer for the Church found on page 816 of the Book of Common Prayer as a useful example; and be it further

**Resolved**, that the Episcopal Diocese of Indianapolis commit itself and its officers to open and prompt sharing of information and expertise with the task force if and when so called; and be it further

**Resolved**, that the Episcopal Diocese of Indianapolis believes that just as the Holy Spirit is urging the Episcopal Church to re-imagine itself, so the Holy Spirit **is** also urging all of the **constituent** members of the church to re-imagine themselves, through the conversion of individual hearts, parishes, and dioceses to more faithfully

- proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom
- teach, baptize, and nurture new believers
- respond to human need by loving service
- seek to transform unjust structures of society
- **strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth;**

and be it further

**Resolved**, that this Convention, under the legislative powers vested in it by the Constitution of the Diocese of Indianapolis IV.4.(c) create a committee whose purpose is to

- **study scripture and pray for God's continual blessing upon the whole church and especially God's people in the Episcopal Diocese of Indianapolis**
- engage in theological and historical reflection on the diocese as the organizing unit of Christ's Church
- make itself available to the task force established by C095 as fellow travelers in discernment of the will of God for the Church
- engage in appreciative inquiry of the programs, activities, and outreach of the Episcopal Diocese of Indianapolis, obtaining the wisdom, perspectives, and expertise of others throughout the diocese, including those not often heard from
- discern a shared vision for the mission and ministries of the Episcopal Diocese of Indianapolis, and the relationship among the diocese and its constituent missions, parishes, and other bodies that reflects the love of Jesus Christ and the theology and polity of the Episcopal Church **calling upon any and all members of the diocese and the broader community of faith to assist in their discernment and examination,**
- develop recommendations for the diocese and its constituent missions, parishes, and other bodies to achieve that vision together, with God's help

- meet by Easter to establish the working structure for the committee and beginning the work, that the committee delivers an interim report to the 176<sup>th</sup> Convention and a final report to the

177<sup>th</sup> Convention, the latter to be published no later than August 6, 2014, (the Feast of the Transfiguration), on its discernment findings and recommendations, with such reports also to be published freely and made contemporaneously available online, along with such resolutions as may be necessary to implement those recommendations;

and be it further

**Resolved**, that the committee be composed of at least nine and no more than fifteen members, to be selected by the Executive Council through an open nominations process assuring that the members represent the diversity of the diocese in geography, demographics, talents, and order of ministry, including those at a critical distance from the power structures of the diocese, that the members of the committee be named no later than January 18, 2013, (the Feast of the Confession of St. Peter the Apostle ), that the committee select its own chair and other officers, and be it further

**Resolved**, that the Executive Council, using the powers granted to it by the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Diocese of Indianapolis, make such resources available to the committee as are necessary to enable this resolution to be implemented energetically and successfully, “...for surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope.” (Jeremiah 29:11)

## EXPLANATION

The 77<sup>th</sup> General Convention of The Episcopal Church meeting in Indianapolis unanimously passed Resolution C095, Structural Reform, to re-imagine the structure of the Episcopal Church, noting:

The administrative and governance structures of The Episcopal Church have grown over the years so that they now comprise approximately 47% of the church-wide budget and sometimes hinder rather than further this Church’s engagement in God’s mission. Reform is urgently needed to facilitate this Church’s strategic engagement in mission and allow it to more fully live into its identity as the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society in a world that has changed dramatically over the years but that also presents extraordinary missional opportunity.

The 77<sup>th</sup> General Convention chartered a task force to develop a vision to restructure the high level structures of the Episcopal Church for a changed environment, to be presented at the 78<sup>th</sup> General Convention in 2015.

This resolution establishes a similar committee in the Diocese of Indianapolis.

The Episcopal Diocese of Indianapolis, along with many other dioceses of the church, faces a challenge. Our parishes are committed to engaging in mission and ministry to the communities around them and to people in need far away. But not everything is working – from 2000 to

2010, average Sunday attendance in the diocese fell by 19.8%. Our diocesan structures are little changed in response.

As ever, the Holy Spirit calls us to be a missional church, spreading the Good News of Jesus and doing God's work in the world. A process of prayer, self-examination and discernment is necessary to hear God's call to us for how we must change to empower our parishes, missions, and members to boldly, energetically, and creatively proclaim the Gospel in the world through word and deeds.

Sponsored by  
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