



Guidelines for Submitting Memorials to the General Convention

When preparing a memorial, please use these guidelines, the resources that are noted within this document, and the Rules of Order in the most recent [Constitution and Canons](#). It is the responsibility of the memorial proposer to write their memorials in the proper form and to conform to any requirements of the Rules of Order.

About Memorials

Memorials are essentially a message to General Convention and are not to be confused with the typical definition we associate with ‘memorial’. Further, memorials at General Convention are completely different from the Memorial Messages for departed Bishops and the Memorial Roll for departed Deputies.

For the purpose of this guide, memorial refers only to this type of document submitted by Interim Bodies, Legislative Committees, Bishops, Deputies, Dioceses, and Provinces to General Convention.

Memorial vs. Resolution

In the context of General Convention, a memorial is comparable to a petition. Memorials do not create binding actions. Often, they are for one of the following purposes:

- Asking the Church to commend or commemorate a person, event, or other matter. These are likely to be referred to the Committee on Privilege and Courtesy that can put forward Courtesy Resolutions to the floor of Convention.
- Asking for the Church to take legislative action on something. This can be about a resolution that has already been submitted for consideration by a Legislative Committee, asking for it to be accepted, rejected, modified, etc. or for something that has not yet been proposed, to ask for a resolution to be created and put forward to General Convention.
- Asking the Church to take a stance on an issue, that could be to endorse, reject, or reaffirm something.

Resolutions call on General Convention to take specific legislative action such as amending the Canons, creating/funding/starting a particular initiative, or enacting specific policies and procedures. While a memorial can ask for any of those things to happen, a resolution would dictate what must happen and, to varying degrees, how that would occur. Please see the [Resolution Writing Guidelines](#) for more information on writing resolutions.

Resources for Preparing Memorials

Some helpful questions to ask while researching to prepare your memorial:

1. Has this been proposed before? If so, how did General Convention act on the matter? If the Convention has already acted, what are you asking that is different?
2. What other groups are working on this issue or topic? Are they planning to submit resolutions or memorials?
3. What resolutions have been passed by previous General Conventions that relate to this topic?
4. How much context is necessary for this memorial? Brevity is helpful and highly recommended.

The Archives of The Episcopal Church

<https://www.episcopalarchives.org>

The digital archives maintained by The Archives of the Episcopal Church are an excellent tool for researching your memorial's topic. Some particularly helpful areas of the digital archive to search include:

- Acts of Convention
- The resolves of Executive Council
- Episcopal News Service (ENS) articles

If you need assistance in your search, please contact The Archives at research@episcopalarchives.org or 800-525-9327.

Writing Memorials

Proposer

The Interim Body, Legislative Committee, Deputy, Bishop, Diocese, or Province that writes and submits a memorial is the proposer of the memorial as referred to in the Rules of Order.

Memorials should take the following form:

To the Deputies and Bishops of The Episcopal Church assembled at the 81st General Convention:

[Here follows a description of the action being urged and the arguments for the action.]

Respectfully submitted,

[Here follows name of the proposer]

When submitting the memorial, the proposer (the Interim Body, Legislative Committee, Bishop, Deputy, Diocese, or Province) must be clearly indicated immediately after "Respectfully submitted."

Following the proposer, and only if required, the endorsers should be listed. (See below for more information.)

Any supporters of the memorial are then listed. Supporters are optional. (See below for more information.)

Editing, Formatting, and Extra Materials

Memorials are primarily text documents and may be lightly edited by the General Convention Office to standardize the formatting and correct some elements to fit standards used by the General Convention such as punctuation of titles or names of people or institutions, but the text will not be copyedited or modified. Proofreading is the responsibility of the proposer prior to submission.

Logos may be changed for size but any other elements such as images or diagrams are not accepted. Links to other documents or articles are acceptable, but additional materials (such as a copy of an article referenced in the memorial) cannot be included. The General Convention suggests creating memorials as a .doc, .docx, or .txt document.

Endorsers

Dioceses, Provinces, Interim Bodies, and Legislative Committees are not required to have any endorsers beyond the group that is proposing it.

Bishops are not required to have any endorsers for memorials.

Deputies are required to have two other Deputies endorse a memorial. Each Deputy may propose no more than three memorials.

Supporters

All memorials can have individuals or groups (Interim Body, Diocese, Province, organization, committee, etc.) as *supporters*. This is not an official endorsement but does allow the Legislative Committee and anyone viewing it in the virtual binder system to see who else backs the memorial.

An example of a memorial, submitted by a diocese, can be found here:

<https://extranet.generalconvention.org/staff/files/download/26864>

Submitting Memorials

To submit a memorial please send a **Word document** to gc.support@episcopalchurch.org. **Please do not submit a pdf file.**

Memorials, once they are correctly submitted, are put through to the appropriate Legislative Committee(s) in the order that they are received, but this does not guarantee that they will be considered. As with other legislative business, Legislative Committees must conduct and conclude their work in tandem with the legislative calendar. Any memorials that were not considered in time will not be moved onto any interim body or future General Convention.

To help ensure that your memorial will be considered, please try to submit your memorial as early as possible.

Distribution

Once successfully submitted, memorials will be translated into Spanish, referred to the appropriate Legislative Committee(s) by the Secretary of General Convention, and posted to the [Memorials](#) section of the virtual binder application.

If you have questions about submitting a memorial, please contact gc.support@episcopalchurch.org.