

All Memorials to the 79th General Convention

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The Episcopal Diocese of Southwest Florida

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May 31, 2018

To the Deputies and Bishops of the Episcopal Church assembled at the 79th General Convention,

The following resolution was adopted by the 49th Diocesan Convention of the Diocese of Southwest Florida, on October 14, 2017:

Resolved, that the 49th Annual Convention of the Diocese of Southwest Florida shall memorialize to the 79th General Convention of the Episcopal Church that the 79th General Convention direct the Executive Council to prepare and the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget and Finance to present a budget to the 80th General Convention in which Diocesan Commitments for funding the budget are set at a rate no higher than 12.5% beginning with the next triennium (2022–2024);

And be it further Resolved, that the member dioceses of this Church commit to paying the full asking, with the expectation that the minimum commitment from each diocese of this Church shall reach the asked level during the 2022-2024 triennium.

Respectfully submitted,

Canon Anne Vickers

Secretary of Diocesan Convention of the Diocese of Southwest Florida

To the Bishops and Deputies of the Episcopal Church Assembled at the 79th General Convention,

We believe that "The earth is the LORD'S and all that is in it, the world and all who dwell therein."
(Psalm 24)

One of the most dangerous and daunting challenges we face is global climate change. This is, at least in part, a direct result of our burning of fossil fuels. Such human activities could raise worldwide average temperatures by three to eleven degrees Fahrenheit in this century. Rising average temperatures are already wreaking environmental havoc, and, if unchecked, portend devastating consequences for every aspect of life on earth.

Climate change is recognized as a human made threat to all God's people, creatures and the entire created order, while particularly placing unjust and unequitable burdens and stresses on native peoples, poor communities and people of color. The leaders of over 190 countries have signed the Paris Climate Accord, acknowledging the critical role every country must play if the life-sustaining climate of the earth is to continue to sustain life as we have always known it.

The Book of Common Prayer bids us to pray, "Grant that, as we probe the mysteries of your creation, we may come to know you more truly, and more surely fulfill our role in your eternal purpose. Give us wisdom and reverence so to use the resources of nature, that no one may suffer from our abuse of them, and that generations yet to come may continue to praise you for your bounty" BCP p. 827

Therefore the Episcopal Church in Connecticut has resolved to work collaboratively across the state with local governments, other denominations and communities of faith, as well as community partners and agencies, school systems, businesses and other stakeholders to take concrete steps to address climate change in our local communities and to uphold the aims of the Paris accord.

Inspired also by the 2011 Pastoral Letter from the House of Bishops of the Episcopal Church, we have resolved and committed to helping community members across the ECCT see the ways in which relatively small lifestyle changes in their own families and homes can make big differences in terms of environmental impact, with special attention to habits around food and eating, heating and light, trash and recycling, transportation, and land and water use. We have called the worshiping communities of the ECCT to a season of prayer, contemplation, preaching, action, and celebration of the infinitude, mystery, and grace of God's created order that helps the faithful see themselves as essential parts of the divine plan of a web of life and as stewards of God's creation; deeply committed to advocating for those people and creatures rendered most vulnerable by climate change and therefore in the greatest need of protection and justice.

Concrete actions may include but are not limited to:

- Keeping the Sabbath by disengaging from electronics and un-necessary transport and by resting 'off the grid' as much as possible, thereby restoring and refreshing our souls and our spiritual life
- Greening our parishes and helping parishioners green their homes through use of renewables such as solar power and with the use and application of new technologies in lights, thermostats, and efficient use appliances
- Paying attention to how and what we drive and working for more and better public transit
- Conserving and protecting our water and air
- Eschewing plastics
- Recycling
- Working to reduce food waste and eating locally sourced foods as much as possible
- Planting and sustaining organic community gardens, using the fruit of the earth to feed the poor
- Protecting the habitats of local flora and fauna
- Working with our local and state governments for sustainability
- Advocating locally, nationally and globally for a cleaner climate, for environmental justice, and for those people and creatures most negatively impacted by climate change and environmental exploitation

Sources

ESUSA House of Bishops Pastoral Letter of 2011

The Bible and the BCP

A Life Of Grace For the Whole World Curriculum by The Rev.'s Stephanie M. Johnson and Jerry Cappel

Respectfully submitted,

The Episcopal Church of Connecticut. Voted and affirmed at the November 2017 Connecticut Convention

To the Deputies and Bishops of the Episcopal Church assembled at the 79th General Convention in Austin, TX:

In May of 2016 a group of Generation X and Millennial clergy (most simply defined as clergy born after 1965) gathered for a weeklong conference in Portland, Oregon. This group grew out of Gathering the Next Generation, a convocation which gave voice to previously ignored leaders in GenX. This time, a more specific class of previously ignored voices rose to the forefront: younger clergy identifying as women serving The Episcopal Church. Much of the conversation that week centered around the reality of sexism in our Church. It was a #metoo conversation before the hashtag went viral.

Thanks to the Holy Spirit and the faithfulness of those gathered, a courageous space was created in which women could tell stories of their experiences of harassment, discrimination and abuse within the church. Women spoke to the fact that they have to be mindful of their bodies at all times and in all places. For so many, their bodies are not safe in the world or in the church, just because they are female. For women of color, those who are trans* or gender non-conforming or open about non-hetero sexualities, this fear, hypervigilance, harassment and abuse is all the more pronounced.

Women in the room in 2016 reported instances in which they were discriminated against or harassed - many being verbally harassed, others touched without their consent, still others being subject to wage or hiring discrimination because of their gender. Many of these incidents occurred since the election and consecration of the Most Rev. Katharine Jefferts Schori in 2009. Some were reported to diocesan staff or Title IV officers, but many of those reports came to no consequence.

For many of the men present, this was the first time they had heard these stories from their female-identified colleagues. Although the truths shared were difficult to hear, the men present listened compassionately and gave the women the time and space needed to tell their stories. At the end of the gathering, many men expressed a desire to learn how to be better allies in their own contexts. We have included concrete and timely suggestions for those who wish to be allies and advocates at the end of this document.

Many of us present for these conversation are writing to the leaders gathered in Austin for the 79th General Convention in the hopes this story can be made into a chapter of a longer narrative of truth-telling and reconciliation. We want to continue to this important work of healing and change. The church is failing to protect and advocate for the women we have called to leadership in both clerical and lay capacities. We are failing to nurture and encourage the talent which will be needed to steer the church into a new age. Women continue to be underpaid across the church,

and underrepresented in positions of influence and power.¹ The election of a female Presiding Bishop did not end sexism in the church. It is not the issue of a former age.

Easter is foundational to our story as Christians. All the resurrection narratives in the gospels tell us that, though they were stripped of power in the institutional church for centuries, women were the first witnesses to the resurrected Christ. We need to listen to their stories today - and seek the healing of our God, who through Christ's own abused body opened new possibilities of reconciliation. We need more courageous spaces where those who have been victims of harassment, discrimination and abuse can share their stories. Women need to be heard and believed - and The Episcopal Church must act to discipline abusers and protect potential victims.

We need holy conversations - and we also need action. We need those in positions of power, still predominantly white men, to be compassionate listeners and strong allies; to lift up and empower their female colleagues. We need our bishops to be pastors, our Title IV officers to take complaints seriously and act swiftly, and our vestries and hiring committees to understand and value women's leadership.

It is the hope of those signing this memorial that our time in Oregon can be a model for other holy conversations that our church needs to have, particularly around the ways we categorize ourselves by race, gender, sexuality and other labels which create privileged and minority classes - and the harassment, abuse, and discrimination that is prevalent in our churches even against those called to ordained leadership. We ask The Episcopal Church to take up this call for gender equity and to expend resources to create a more equitable church.

In the Appendix of this Memorial, we offer to the Church recommendations for conversation and action, including suggestions on how to listen and be an ally to those who have experienced gender discrimination, harassment, or abuse. Suggestions are included that may be implemented on the national, diocesan, parish and personal level - while we acknowledge this work is systemic and will take many years, we are also hopeful that individuals and parishes can take decisive and liberating action now. We hope the 79th General Convention will commend these and other action steps like these to the whole Church, and make widely available resources to achieve them. May we all be about the work of restoration and reconciliation together.

In Christ,

¹ See the Church Pension Group's annual report on clergy compensation - for any year in which statistics are broken down by gender. Annually, this report records a disparity in how male and female clergy are deployed, hired, and paid which evidences a wage and hiring gap that begins at ordination and only grows over years of service. Notably, CPG does not record or report the race/ethnicity of priests, which means that we have no body of statistical evidence which allows us to analyze whether, as we suspect, women and men of color are also underpaid or underrepresented in positions of power.

Memorial submitted by Deputy Michael Burke, Alaska and Deputy Helen Svoboda-Barber, North Carolina

Endorsed by Deputy Molly James, Connecticut and Edwin Johnson, Massachusetts. Also supported by additional deputies and other priests of The Episcopal Church:

Dominic Moore, Arizona
Paul Fromberg, California
Gia Hayes-Martin, California
Cameron Partridge, California
Stacy Alan, Chicago
Kate Spelman, Chicago
Kristin Uffelman White, Chicago
B. Wiley Ammons, Florida
Amy Dafler Meaux, Lexington
David Sibley, Long Island
Tommy Dillon, Louisiana
Sara Shisler Goff, Maryland
Anne Nicholson, Maryland
Amy McCreath, Massachusetts
Deon Johnson, Michigan
Justin P. Chapman, Minnesota
Jered Weber-Johnson, Minnesota
Beth Scriven, Missouri
Marisa Tabizon Thompson, Nebraska
Ruth Anne Garcia, New York
Martha Koriemek, New York
Yejide Peters, New York
Mary Catherine Young, New York
Danae Ashley, Olympia
Jedediah Fox, Olympia
Robert C. Laird, Olympia
Helen McPeak, Olympia
Karen Tiegs, Oregon
Eric Bond, Pennsylvania
Callie Swanlund, Pennsylvania
Noah H. Evans, Pittsburgh
Anna Carmichael, San Joaquin
Glenna Huber, Washington DC

APPENDIX

Calls to action:

The lack of gender equity is a systemic problem that will require change and participation by all members, at all levels and all manifestations of the church. Individuals on their own cannot solve the problem of sexism, nor the problems of racism, transphobia or homophobia which are intertwined with it. We must recognize that these are systemic problems that demand systemic solutions which involve everyone in the church committing to changes in culture and practice.

For individuals, at the personal and parish level:

- All members of the church, lay and clergy, need to listen to the stories of women and people of color about their experiences in the church, and believe them.
- Search Committees should work to ensure women and people of color are part of search processes. Clergy in a search process should ask how many women and people of color are being considered for the same position.
- Lay and clergy must be open and active about discussing compensation, seeking to reduce the blanket of silence cast over discussions of money under which inequality thrives.
- Church leadership, lay and ordained, must work to create a culture of transparency within congregations. At minimum, all vestry members know the compensation of each individual staff person, lay or ordained.
- If you are on a vestry or in senior leadership and privy to knowledge of staff salaries, consider whether staff are paid equitably, considering such objective factors as years of service, level of education, and size of your congregation. If they are not, ask why and suggest that the parish consider how to rectify this.
- If you are a senior clergy person, be intentional about how you can make it better for other clergy, especially those who are female, people of color, LGBTQ+, and/or younger. We do not need to perpetuate cycles of discrimination and exclusion; what you went through does not have to be the way things are.
- For those calling a new leader, recognize that female leadership models might be different from male norms and are not inherently wrong or inferior. In fact, the changing religious landscape calls us all to adapt.

For diocesan leadership:

- Engage in thorough training in Title IV practices and procedures for all and take Title IV seriously as a resource for healing and reconciliation.
- Be proactive, not merely reactive, in preventing misconduct.
- Provide mechanisms to ensure that those who have a history of sexist or racist behavior, even if it does not rise to the level of a Title IV offense, are not permitted to serve in positions of significant leadership or perpetuate a culture of discrimination.
- Provide family leave for all clergy and staff, regardless of gender.
- If your bishop is female, be supportive and respectful of her leadership.
- Actively support women in transition processes and throughout their tenures.

- Provide and require training resources for search committees to prevent implicit bias.
- Publish salaries, and be transparent about pay and benefits for clergy in the parish and working for the diocese.
- Provide comprehensive guidelines on clergy compensation based on objective factors such as size of parish and years of service to ensure justice and equity, taking into consideration the top of the range as well as the bottom.

Churchwide:

- Provide an extra-diocesan intake officer to ensure that no one fears reporting a Title IV offense to their diocesan officer or bishop.
- Record and publish statistics, by diocese, of Title IV charges, including the number of complaints filed, number of investigations launched, and number of disciplinary measures taken.
- Broaden the scope of Title IV to apply not only to TEC clergy, but also laypeople and clergy from other denominations serving in TEC.
- Suspend the Statute of Limitations for filing of Title IV charges, at least temporarily, so that those offenses not previously reported can be brought to light and investigated, and perpetrators disciplined.
- Provide Churchwide training resources for hiring to promote women in leadership, including implicit bias training for search committees, and targeted recruitment opportunities for women and people of color.
- Realize that hiring and compensation *do* matter - to individuals and to the Church as a whole - and that the inequalities in hiring and compensation which are well-documented by CPG are part of systemic oppression.
- Realize, too, that the current reporting on hiring and pay is incomplete, as it does not include race/ethnicity. Ask that CPG collect race/ethnicity data from participants and include it in their reporting. Many of our siblings in the clergy live at the intersection of two or more marginalized identities. Intersectionality must always be considered in combating injustice.
- Given that variations in compensation frequently have more to do with sexism and racism than objective factors or the ability of a candidate to negotiate, consider offering a formal process of review, when requested, for those in and approaching retirement who have been underpaid in their service to the church. Ask that CPG make a fund available to supplement egregiously small pensions.
- Work to have more women in senior leadership positions, including but not limited to the House of Bishops; recruit women into senior leadership and support them as they serve there.
- Provide churchwide mechanisms that invite discernment about the leadership of Bishops, including reimagining the role of bishops in a variety of ways. If the House of Bishops is to reflect the full diversity of the Church, the role of a bishop will not look the same from one diocese to the next, nor from one decade to the next.

May we all be about the work of restoration and reconciliation together. #ustoo

To the Deputies and Bishops of the Episcopal Church assembled at the 79th General Convention:

Whereas the 230th Annual Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts passed a resolution titled, “Christian Response to Latin American Migration Crisis” at their 2015 gathering; and

Whereas the 230th Annual Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts expressed support for the UN Declaration of Human Rights as the standard of treatment for people who flee their countries; the bishops and deputies of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts urge the 79th General Convention to call for action by the Episcopal Public Policy Network:

- 1) advocate the U.S. Government revise the policy of border externalization, which is the interception of migrants who are en route to our southern border.
- 2) advocate the U.S. Government end the detention of asylum-seekers, after they have been found to have credible asylum claims and to pose no threat to the community, and be it further
- 3) advocate that the U.S. Government play a positive nonviolent role in supporting the governments of Mexico, El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala to address root issues that lead the masses of people to leave their countries; and be it further

We also encourage the 79th General Convention of this church commend initiatives such as Cristosal Foundation in El Salvador (an Episcopal human rights organization which seeks to find regional solutions), the Anglican Church of the Central American Region (IARCA) and other such organizations that work toward addressing the root causes of Latin American migration.

We further encourage this General Convention to condemn policies of the U.S. Government that mercilessly separate families, including women, children, and infants.

**Respectfully submitted,
Deputies and Bishops of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts**

Byron Rushing, L1

Rev. Edwin Johnson, C1

Fredrica Thompsett, L2

Rev. Thomas Brown, C2

William Boyce, L3

Rev. Karen Montagno, C3

Betsy Ridge Madsen, L4

Rev. Bill Parnell, C4

Sue Perkinson, L5

Rev. Debbie Phillips, C5

Rt. Rev. Alan Gates, Bishop Diocesan

Rt. Rev. Gayle Harris, Bishop Suffragan

Memorial Submitted by The Diocese of New York

Against Caste-and Descent-Based Discrimination 2017

Resolved: that the 241st Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of New York send the following Memorial to the Deputies and Bishops of the Episcopal Church to be assembled at the 79th General Convention:

“Resolved: that the 239th Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of New York condemn the human rights violation of discrimination based on caste and descent wherever it occurs and support its elimination particularly as it occurs within the United States both within and outside the Church; and further

Resolved: that the 239th Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of New York call on congregations in the Diocese of New York to acknowledge the fundamental injustice of caste-and descent-based discrimination, a clear human rights violation; and further

Resolved: that the Episcopal Diocese of New York engage in legislative advocacy and education to raise awareness of the pervasive nature of this human rights violation; and further

Resolved: that the Episcopal Diocese of New York charge the India Network with the preparation of an e-mail document outlining caste-and descent-based discrimination and the atrocities associated with it, such document to be distributed to all Diocesan parishes before the next Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of New York.

Explanation

Many of our sisters and brothers in this Diocese have come to us from India. They bring us personal witness to an issue currently prominent in our news media: Many of God’s children, especially women and bearers of alternative identity and preference, are subjected to horrific violence. Among the victimized are people who have for millennia lived under caste-and descent-based discrimination. These people have chosen the name Dalit for themselves. The Dalit population worldwide is estimated to number more than 260 million people.

Ours is a concern shared increasingly on an interfaith level especially by those in our churches, mosques, and temples who advocate for oppressed minorities everywhere.

Because of our long term relationship with our Christian partners in India, members of the India Network have represented our Diocese at two events in our Nation’s capital in support of the International Commission for Dalit Rights. The first was a march to the White House in the spring of 2014 and the second was an anti -caste-and descent-based conference in March 2015.”

To the Deputies and Bishops of the Episcopal Church assembled at the 79th General Convention:

Recognizing the continuing theological diversity of this Church, and in the Episcopal Diocese of Tennessee, in regard to same sex marriage and the blessing of same sex unions, and out of respect for the deeply held beliefs across the range of opinion, we, members of the 186th Annual Convention of the Diocese of Tennessee (January 19-20, 2018), respectfully request that as you, the Bishops and Deputies of the 79th General Convention, prayerfully consider the re-authorization of “Liturgical Resources I” for the next Triennium, you take in account the exclusion, competing convictions, and loss of community experienced by members of this Diocese under the current terms of authorization for the texts.

Respectfully submitted,
The 186th Annual Convention of the Diocese of Tennessee

A Memorial to the 79th General Convention

To the Deputies and Bishops of The Episcopal Church assembled at the 79th General Convention:

We, the undersigned laity and clergy of the Episcopal Church, deputies and non-deputies, call upon the Episcopal Church, the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music, and any body that may engage in revision of the Book of Common Prayer, or produce other liturgies for the use of this Church, to keep the following things close to their hearts, and at the forefront of their minds:

The Episcopal Church affirms the Baptismal promise to “continue in the apostles’ teaching” (BCP 304) as part of the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic church. Therefore this teaching ought to be reflected in our liturgy.

We affirm that the Christological titles found in the New Testament are integral to the Gospel. While some of these are experienced negatively in the world because of human sin, we affirm that Jesus redeems that which is abused. The dominion of Jesus Christ is not analogous to these concepts as they operate according to the logic of the world. Instead, it subverts them. It is good news for all people that Jesus is the Lord, the true King who upholds them and overturns abusive powers.

We affirm that the Incarnation of Jesus Christ was a real historic event, such that the Jesus of history is the Christ of Faith, and this Incarnation is eternal. Therefore Jesus’ clearly-expressed gender as a human man, though not theologically significant for salvation, is a real and important part of what occurred when the Word was made Flesh and lived among us as a gendered human being (John 1:14).

We affirm that the Trinitarian language of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is not simply metaphorical but is an important part of the inheritance of the catholic faith grounded in the revelation of Jesus, who himself referred to God as “Father” and taught us to pray in that manner. We come to know God the Father as the specific and particular Father of the Son. Therefore the Fatherhood of God is not a platonic form for human fatherhood, nor is it an extrapolation from human fatherhood. It instead grows from the identity of Jesus as the Son who prayed to the Father, and commanded that his disciples baptize in his Father’s name, his own name, and in the name of The Holy Spirit. Retaining the Trinitarian language revealed by scripture and tradition is essential for us as part of the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church, for our ecumenical commitments, and for our faithfulness to the Apostles’ teaching.

We affirm that balanced, expansive, and gender-neutral language for God ought to be explored, and the whole range of Biblical images for God should be made use of in our worship, within the bounds of the scripture and the Apostolic Catholic faith; whereas gender-neutral language for humanity ought to be actively pursued, as our relationship to our own gender identity constitutes a significant part of our experience as mortal humans.

We commend the establishing of theological norms for the use of gendered, non-gendered, inclusive, balanced, and expansive language in the liturgies of this church, and ask that such norms be clearly articulated and affirmed by General Convention so as to guide any future process of Prayer Book Revision.

Explanation:

Our Baptismal promises require us to take seriously the Apostolic Faith we inherited in the Holy Scriptures and the Creeds. The late theologian C. B. Moss pointed out that “the Christian Faith is a revealed religion. Its original sources are prophecy, not philosophy” (*The Christian Faith* 35.1). As our Catechism says, the Holy Scriptures are the inspired Word of God written (BCP 853), by which we can recognize what is and is not the work of the Holy Spirit (BCP 852). We are therefore called to take seriously what Holy Spirit has revealed through the writers and prophets and, more importantly, what Jesus revealed about God and our relationship to God. This relationship between the Church and our Lord finds its ultimate expression in the Eucharist, and so must be, as Jesus said, a relationship in “Spirit and in Truth” (John 4:23). Such truth as is always defined by Jesus who is the Truth (John 14:6). Therefore our liturgy must conform to the Spirit’s revelation, and so too must our language of and about God be guided primarily by revelation—both in the Holy Scriptures, and more importantly in the Word made flesh, Jesus the Son (John 1:14, Hebrews 1:2).

We understand some have experienced abuse at the hands of people in power. However, the proper response to this abuse is redemption rather than destruction. As Thomas Aquinas said, “grace does not destroy nature but perfects it” (ST I.1.8.r2). We recognize the role of human reason and knowledge in theology, that it can be sanctified and redeemed by the Spirit. Along with this, God will redeem all creation (Romans 8:21), and so we know nothing created is bad in itself, but everything is subject to the corruption of sin. This also applies to lordships, power structures, authorities, dominion, and gender. None of these are bad or sinful in themselves, but good and created of God. Certainly there are many “lords”, “gods”, and “powers” which claim our allegiance and are not of God, and those we must reject as false gods who are under God’s judgment. For the nature of power in the human world does tend toward selfish domination, a paradigm Jesus overturned on the Cross by displaying self-giving love for the world he created by his atoning death at the hands of those in power. Therefore, the proper response to the abuse of power is not to remove the language of power from our common prayer but to redeem it. The Good News for the powerless is the original confession that Jesus is Lord (Romans 10:9) and the King of kings and Lord of lords (Revelation 19:16) who rules by right over the abusive powers and authorities, and so has the right to judge them for their role in abuse. It is the Good News of salvation for the orphan and widow that the true King is on their side, (Psalm 146:9) and he will restore power, dominion, and authority to their redeemed and sanctified form. Removing the language of lordship dilutes that Gospel of hope for those who need the power of God to save them from false lords and unjust powers.

This Jesus whom we worship is the Incarnate King and remains in his Resurrected Incarnate body a human male; for the Christ of Faith is the same Jesus of History. Our Faith is a historic faith rooted in real events whereby God stepped into human history to save a broken world from sin and death. True, Jesus being a male is not significant for salvation—the main point being that the Divine Person of the Son took on human nature, to live and die as one of us for our salvation—but his gender was and is still a part of who he is. To remove gender from Jesus is to dehumanize him and reduce the importance of the Incarnation as truly becoming a human being. Gender is a part of the human experience and Jesus experienced and identified as a male, an identity we should respect.

As this Jesus is the very image of the invisible God, (Colossians 1:15) his words and language should be the primary source of our own. The Trinitarian language of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are not merely metaphors, but part of the inheritance of the catholic faith grounded in the revelation of Jesus. It was Jesus himself who referred to God as Father and taught us to pray in that manner. After Jesus the Church worked long and hard to understand the best way to talk about God without falling into modalism with phrases such as “Creator, Redeemer, Sanctifier”. Indeed, all three Divine Persons are involved in creation, redemption, and sanctification. Preserving the revelation by Scripture and Tradition of Trinitarian language is central to being part of God’s One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church which remains faithful to the Apostles’ testimony about Jesus and his teachings.

Finally, the Scriptures reveal to us a God of all, who is beyond the created world and who made all that is, seen and unseen, out of nothing. This God is not like other gods who were merely forces of nature or part of creation as animals, plants, and rocks. Instead the God of Israel is without a body and completely non-material. So we know that God has no body and is therefore outside of gender. Human language, though, needs gender to communicate and God was inculturated by means of the Hebrew and Greek language as a male most of the time. Within this revelation, there is room for expansive language both following Biblical precepts and gender-neutral references, in accordance with the catholic teaching that the Divine Person of the Father and Spirit are bodiless and therefore genderless. It is also true that we are gendered as embodied human beings, and our liturgy ought to reflect us accurately. Jesus did not just die for all “men” but for all human beings. In that sense, Scripture does reflect the language of its time in using, for example, “brothers” to mean “brothers and sisters” as a familial term within the new reality of the Body of Christ. Our hermeneutic takes this cultural aspect of language into account, a reality that can and should be updated in our worship without doing injustice to the words and nature of Jesus, who he was and is, and who he revealed God to be.

Respectfully submitted,

The Rev’d Jonathan Adams
St. Martin's Episcopal Church, Houston, Texas

The Rev. Hickman Alexandre (Deputy)
St. James, Brookhaven, NY

The Rev. J Randolph Alexander, Jr. (Deputy)
Immanuel Church on the Hill, Alexandria

Dr. Mark W. Ardrey-Graves
St. Timothy’s Episcopal Church, Winston-Salem, North Carolina

The Rev'd Lennel V. Anderson, III
St Francis in the Fields, Somerset, Pennsylvania

Sr. Elizabeth Marguerite Anderson, AF
Lay Deputy from the Diocese of Michigan

The Rev'd Shireen Baker
Church of Our Saviour, Elmhurst, Illinois

Mr. Brian Bechtel
Virginia Theological Seminary

The Rev. Dr. Kristine Blaess (Deputy)
St. George's Episcopal Church, Nashville, Tennessee

The Rev Terrence Buckley, Christ Church, Bellport, New York

The Rev'd Joshua M. Caler
Christ Episcopal Church, Pottstown, Pennsylvania

The Rev. Canon Bill Carroll (Deputy)
Diocese of Oklahoma

The Rev'd Jonathan Chesney
Elmhurst Hospital, Elmhurst, Illinois

The Rev'd Gus Paul Chrysson
Virginia Theological Seminary (Deacon, IARCA)

The Rt. Rev'd Anthony Clavier
Bishop (Retired)

The Rev'd David Cobb
Sewanee, Tennessee

The Rev'd Joshua T. Condon
Holy Spirit, Houston, Texas

The Rev'd Sarah Condon
St. Martin's Episcopal Church, Houston, Texas

The Rev'd Michael B. Dangelo
Church of the Redeemer, Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts

The Rev'd Ben DeHart
Calvary-St. George, New York

The Rev'd
The Rev'd Tod Dill
St. Margaret's, Waxhaw, North Carolina

Mr. Mark Dirksen
Emmanuel Memorial Episcopal Church, Champaign, Illinois

The Rev'd John Drymon
Trinity Episcopal Church, Findlay, Ohio

The Rev'd J. Wesley Evans, OPA
St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, Sherman, Texas

The Rev'd Charles W. Everson
St. Mary's Episcopal Church, Kansas City, Missouri

The Rev'd David M. Faulkner
The Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd, Terrell, Texas

The Rev'd K. Nicholas Forti
The Fork Church of St Martin's Parish, Doswell, Virginia

Ms. Brit Bjurstrom Frazier
Virginia Theological Seminary

The Rev'd Malone Gilliam
St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Edenton, North Carolina

The Rev'd Cn. Michael R. Gilton (Deputy)

Episcopal Diocese of Dallas

The Rev'd Donald J. Griffin
St. Timothy's Episcopal Church, Winston-Salem, North Carolina

The Rev'd Mark Harris
Trinity Parish Church, Searcy, Arkansas

The Rev'd R-J Heijmen
St. Martin's Episcopal Church, Houston, Texas

The Rev'd Robert Hendrickson
St. Phillip's in the Hills Episcopal Church, Tucson, Arizona

The Rev'd Jody Howard (Deputy)
St. Joseph of Arimathea, Hendersonville, Tennessee

The Rev'd Jason Ingalls
Holy Spirit Episcopal Church, Waco, Texas

Mr. Sumner Jenkins
St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Lynchburg, Virginia

The Rev'd Everett C. Lees (Deputy)
Christ Church Episcopal, Tulsa, Oklahoma

The Rev'd Dr. Russell Levenson, Jr.
St. Martin's Episcopal Church, Houston, Texas

The Rev'd Dr. Robert M. Lewis
St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, Grand Island, Nebraska

The Rev'd Bradley A. Linboom
Church of the Holy Nativity, Clarendon Hills, Illinois

The Rev'd Benjamin B. Maddison
Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, Wenonah, New Jersey

The Rev'd Nic Mather (Alternate)
Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist, Spokane, Washington

The Very Rev'd Charles A. (Chas) Marks
St. Augustine's Church, Kansas City, Missouri

The Rev'd Beth Maynard
Emmanuel Memorial Episcopal Church, Champaign, Illinois

Mr. Robert McCormick
Diocese of Pennsylvania

The Rev'd Justin McIntosh (Deputy)
Leeds Episcopal Church, Markham, Virginia

The Rev'd J. Brian McVey
Episcopal Church of the Advent, Nashville

The Rev'd Dr. Deborah Meister
St. Luke's Episcopal Church, Glastonbury, Connecticut

The Very Rev'd Troy Mendez
Trinity Cathedral, Arizona

The Rev'd Brandt L. Montgomery
Episcopal Diocese of Western Louisiana

The Very Rev'd Kevin L. Morris
The Church of the Ascension, Rockville Centre, New York

The Very Rev. David Mowers
Trinity Church, Baraboo, Wis.

The Rev'd Jonathan D. Musser
Virginia Theological Seminary
All Saints Episcopal Church, Chevy Chase, Maryland

The Rev'd Kevin Olds
St. Timothy's On The Hill, Fairfield, CT

The Rev. Dr. Charles Bryan Owen
St. Luke's, Baton Rouge, Louisiana

The Rev'd Nurya Love Parish (Deputy)
Holy Spirit Episcopal Church and Plainsong Farm and Ministry, Grand Rapids, Michigan

The Rev'd Canon Ezgi Saribay Perkins (Canon Precentor)
The Cathedral Church of St. Paul, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin

The Very Rev'd C. Patrick Perkins
The Cathedral Church of St. Paul, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin

The Rev'd Yejide Peters
All Saints Episcopal Church, Briarcliff Manor, New York

The Rev'd Jacob E. Pierce
St. Peter's Episcopal Church, Charlotte, North Carolina

The Rev'd Dr. Robert Prichard
Arthur Lee Kinsolving Professor of Christianity in America and Instructor in Liturgy
Virginia Theological Seminary

Mr. Tyler Proctor (Vestry)
Episcopal Church of the Incarnation, Gaffney, South Carolina

The Rev. Dr. Bruce M. Robison (Clergy Alternate)
St. Andrew's, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

The Rev'd Robert E. Rhea
All Saints Episcopal Church, Smyrna, TN

The Rev'd Melanie Rowell
The Diocese of Atlanta

The Rev. Kenneth H. Saunders III
St. James Greeneville, TN

The Very Rev'd Jane Schmoetzer (Alternate)
All Saints' Episcopal Church, Richland, Washington

The Very Rev'd Benson Shelton
St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, Culpeper, Virginia

The Rev'd Dr. Kara N. Slade
The Episcopal Church at Princeton University and Trinity Church, Princeton, New Jersey

The Rev'd Canon Aaron W. Smith
The Episcopal Diocese of Florida

The Rt. Rev'd George Sumner
Diocese of Dallas

The Rev'd James R. Stambaugh
Church of the Holy Apostles, Wynnewood, Pennsylvania

The Rev'd Daniel J. S. Stroud
The Bro Famau Group, Diocese of St. Asaph, Wales.
(Previously of the Diocese of Pennsylvania)

The Rev'd Morris K. Thompson, III (Alternate)
Episcopal Church of the Mediator, Meridian, Mississippi

The Rev'd Tommy Thompson
St. Andrew's, West Vincent, Pennsylvania

The Rev'd Keith Voets
St. Alban the Martyr, Queens, New York

Mr. John R. Wallace (Vestry)
Washington Memorial Chapel, Valley Forge, Pennsylvania

Mr. David Wilcox (Vestry)
St. Mary's Episcopal Church, Kansas City, Missouri

The Rev'd Joseph Wolyniak
St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Chesnut Hill, Pennsylvania

The Rev'd Aaron M. G. Zimmerman
St. Alban's Episcopal Church, Waco, Texas

A Memorial to the 79th General Convention Supporting A085: Trial Use of Marriage Liturgies

To the Deputies and Bishops of the Episcopal Church assembled at the 79th General Convention:

We write in response to Resolution B012, "Marriage Rites for the Whole Church," aware as well of Resolution A085, "Trial Use of Marriage Liturgies," proposed by the Task Force on the Study of Marriage.

Forty-two years ago, General Convention declared, "homosexual persons are children of God who have a full and equal claim with all other persons upon the love, acceptance, and pastoral concern and care of the Church" (Resolution 1976-A069). We have an opportunity at this General Convention to take a decisive step toward making this a reality by adopting legislation that would add gender-neutral marriage liturgies to the 1979 Book of Common Prayer.

Resolution B012, which calls for an unlimited extension of trial use of these liturgies, would continue to relegate gender-neutral marriage liturgies to second-class status, sending a message to LGBT Christians that they do not in fact have a full and equal claim upon the pastoral care and concern of the Church.

Such a message hampers our proclamation of the Gospel.

Resolution A085, in addition to setting in motion the process for adding gender-neutral marriage liturgies to the 1979 Book of Common Prayer, would change "Concerning the Service" of Marriage and the Catechism, as well as the proper prefaces for marriage, to state that marriage is a covenant between two people. This language would create a broad tent encompassing different views, including those who believe that marriage is available to any couple, regardless of sexual orientation, and those who believe that the two people must be one man and one woman.

We urge General Convention to adopt for trial use all the revisions of the Book of Common Prayer proposed in Resolution A085.

In addition to providing a clear path toward full marriage equality, General Convention has the opportunity to ensure that every couple that wants to be married in their home church by their priest will be able to do so. Resolution B012 claims to do so by calling for use of "Delegated Episcopal Pastoral Oversight" (DEPO). The House of Bishops has provided DEPO in various forms since 2004, yet in the eight United States dioceses where the bishop has not allowed couples to be married in their home parishes by their priest, none has utilized DEPO to provide this access. It is not clear from Resolution B012 what would be different in the coming triennium.

The June 28, 2018, statement from Bishops Provenzano, McConnell, and Knisely, who proposed and endorsed Resolution B012, cites the statement from some bishops of Province IX

that “the Ninth Province will have to learn how to walk alone” [if the Prayer Book is revised]. We note that the Inter-American Court of Human Rights issued a decision in January 2018 requiring member states to enact marriage equality (“Inter-American Court: States Must Recognize Gender Identity, Same-Sex Marriage,” <http://tinyurl.com/inter-american-court>). When this decision is fully implemented, all dioceses in Province IX will have civil marriage equality in at least some portion of their jurisdiction. This means that Province IX, like the rest of The Episcopal Church, is confronted by a rapidly changing cultural landscape when it comes to marriage. We look forward to walking together as Episcopalians in Province IX live into a new legal reality.

The bishops also express concern about immigrant communities in the U.S. who might object to full marriage equality. We do not believe this correctly assesses the diverse and emerging reality our Church faces as we minister to the immigrants in our midst. Our context, in the Diocese of California, is diverse; our cities and our state as a whole are majority-minority in terms of race and ethnicity, and we are blessed by the presence among us of many immigrants from many cultures. We are a sanctuary diocese, committed to raising our voices and providing support for immigrants whose families and lives are under attack in the present time. We are also a diocese that overwhelmingly embraces our LGBT members, many of whom are also immigrants, and has welcomed their full inclusion in the sacramental life of our congregations and diocese. We know there are diverse views on marriage equality within all of our communities. We have seen growing support for civil and ecclesial marriage equality across all of our communities as marriage has become a possibility and a lived reality for our gay and lesbian neighbors and loved ones.

It is our fervent hope that our actions at this and future General Conventions will not divide the interests of our LGBT sisters and brothers from the needs of members of other minority groups in the Church and the communities we serve. In Resolution A085, we see significant accommodation for a diverse Church with a diversity of perspectives on marriage, and we believe this resolution will move us forward together.

While we recognize that this approach presents a difficult path for some, we hope that with continued engagement and sincere efforts at mutual understanding, we can continue to walk together as we address the needs of the whole Body of Christ, including those drawn into the life of the Church as they undertake one of the most important covenants of their lives.

Submitted in the love we all share in Christ Jesus,

The Bishop and Deputation of the Diocese of California:

The Rt. Rev. Marc Handley Andrus, Bishop of California
The Hon. Warren Wong, L1
Ms. Sarah Lawton, L2
Mr. Christopher Hayes, L3
Ms. Carolyn Gaines, L4
Ms. Anna Marie Hoos, L5

Ms. Diane Fitzgibbon, L6
Ms. Karma Quick-Panwala, L7
Mr. Ronald Hermanson, L8
The Rev. Eric Metoyer, C1
The Rev. Vanessa Glass, C2
The Rev. Merry Chan Ong, C3
The Rev. Hailey McKeefry Delmas, C4
The Rev. David Ota, C5
The Rev. Ruth Meyers, C6
The Rev. Sloane Larrimore, C7
The Rev. Br. Richard Edward Helmer, C8

To the Deputies and Bishops of the Episcopal Church assembled at the 79th General Convention:

Resolution CO14 calls for suicide prevention advocacy and the training of clergy in an evidence-based suicide prevention program. It asks parishes of the Episcopal Church to advocate for suicide prevention programs in their local communities and appeal to state and federal legislators to pass suicide prevention legislation. It also requests that the Church provide funds to give clergy in every diocese the opportunity to learn the best ways to prevent suicides in their communities and parishes.

In 1999, the U.S. Surgeon General declared suicide a serious public health problem and called for increased education about it. Even with increased attention, however, suicide remains among the top ten causes of death across all age groups, with more than 45,000 people dying by suicide in 2016. In addition, for every death, there are 25 suicide attempts. According to the Center for Disease Control, more than 1.4 million adults attempt suicide each year.

Recent research has discovered that the reasons for suicide are complicated. They include biological, psychological, and social and environmental factors as well as current life events. When people who are in positions of influence know the signs of risk and the best ways to speak to someone in crisis, they can prevent suicide.

Research is providing new ways to help people identify the risk factors and effective tools that can help people in suicidal crisis. These identifiers and preventive methods would help Episcopal clergy assist their congregants in times of suicidal risk. More than 60 percent of all Americans have been affected by suicide, and the education of the clergy would make a real difference.

For these reasons, we call upon the 79th General Convention to pass Resolution CO14.

The Rev. Frank J. Alagna, Ph.D., The Rev. Susan Auchincloss, The Rev. Troy Beecham, The Rev. Dr. Debra Brewin-Wilson, The Rev Canon Dr Ellen Clark-King, Dr. Stephen L. Cook, The Rev. Mark L. Fitzhugh, The Rev. Dr. Robert D. Flanagan, The Rev. Dr. Mary Foulke, The Rev. Jack Gilpin, The Rev. Dr. David Gortner, The Rev. Curtis W. Hart, The Rev. Stephen C. Holton, The Rev. Christine A. Jones, The Rev. Dr. Joseph A. Krasinski, The Rev. Deborah A. Lee, The Rev. Claire Lofgren, The Rev. Charles Mayer, The Rev. Michelle Meech, The Rev. Dr. James L. Pahl, Jr., The Rev. Canon K. Jeanne Person, The Rev. Alison Quin, The Rev. David M. Rider, The Rev Mark K. J. Robinson, The Reverend David F. Sellery, The Rt. Rev. Allen K. Shin, The Rev Dr Helen Van Koevering.

MEMORIAL TO THE 79TH GENERAL CONVENTION

To the Deputies and Bishops of the Episcopal Church assembled at the 79th General Convention in Austin, TX:

The Episcopal Diocese of San Diego, gathered in its 44th Diocesan Convention November 11, 2017, adopted the following resolution regarding Compassionate Care of Victims of Clergy Sexual Misconduct:

Resolved, that the 44th Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of San Diego calls upon all members of congregations and all affiliated organizations, individually and in community, to acknowledge that:

- reporting clergy misconduct is a courageous and sacrificial act, demonstrating love for and trust in the church;
- such reporting is an act of service to the church;
- a victim has a right to expect our faith communities to respond with the love and compassion of Christ.

Resolved, further, that the 44th Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of San Diego form a task force to study the experience of victims who report clergy sexual misconduct; become educated on best practices for safeguarding these reporters; and issue recommendations to the Standing Committee, Executive Council and the 45th Convention and memorialize to the 79th General Convention to do the same.

Resolved, further, that the Standing Committee appoint task force members by February 1, 2018, and which task force shall be comprised of passionate advocates for misconduct victims who are committed to ensuring that our faith communities respond with love, compassion, and respect for the reporting victim. Victims of clergy sexual misconduct will be a significant presence on this task force.

Resolved, further, that the recommendations shall reflect a trauma-informed approach (i.e., an approach based on the knowledge and understanding of trauma and its far-reaching implications) to the care of reporting victims, both through the canonical reporting process, as well as in their home parish.

Resolved, further, that the work of the Task Force will in no way alter current Title IV processes, procedures or confidentiality requirements for Complainants and Respondents.

For far too long, the Church has failed to adequately care for those who have the courage to bring forward a claim of being harmed to the very institution that inflicted that harm. The following is the Explanation that accompanied that Resolution:

“It has been 15 years since the Boston Globe exposed the horrific sexual abuse of children by priests within the Roman Catholic Church. There is now a general awareness that clergy sexual misconduct occurs in all denominations; however, it is a lesser known fact that adult women are more likely than children to be victimized by clergy. In fact, based on the size of our own diocese, statistics would suggest

that scores of women who are active members of our congregations have been or will be victims of clergy sexual misconduct in their adult lifetimes.

Reflecting this growing awareness within the past two decades, the Episcopal Church has striven to prevent clergy misconduct, primarily through its Safeguarding God's People program. Further reflecting an evolving culture in which the reality of and the damage caused by sexual exploitation of women is increasingly recognized, the church has strengthened its response to clergy misconduct through the codification of disciplinary procedures in Title IV of its canons. Within Title IV, the desire to promote healing and reconciliation is stated six times. In practice, though, the church lacks sufficient policies to facilitate the healing and recovery of victims. Indeed, studies suggest that at least 5 out of 6 adult victims who report sexual exploitation end up leaving their church as a result. Most leave the Church entirely. Many lose their faith.

Literature, therapists, and victims themselves often attribute this alienation from the church not so much to the original clergy misconduct, but to re-traumatization by both clergy and congregations during and after the reporting process. This re-traumatization often involves disbelief, minimization, slander, isolation, and shunning of the victim. This has been described as an effectual excommunication. In analogous situations outside of the church, whistleblowers are given legal protection, and creating a hostile environment is illegal in both workplaces and schools. There are no such statutes offering protection within one's church. Yet, as followers of Christ and called to be a reconciling community, the church has an even greater obligation than a statute might mandate.

Although an incident of clergy sexual misconduct always represents a failure of the church, this truth is often overlooked. The incident may even be treated as a failure on the part of the victim. Rather than promoting healing and reconciliation, this scapegoating of the victim, who is already deeply traumatized by the misconduct itself, results in deep emotional and spiritual anguish. It does irreparable harm to the victim. It is a missed opportunity for the community to grow into what it should be. And it greatly diminishes the Body of Christ."

Therefore, the Episcopal Diocese of San Diego strongly urges this 79th General Convention to remain vigilant in its care of those affected by clergy misconduct and to adopt measures that seek to lessen that harm and the re-traumatization that follows.

Respectfully submitted,
The 44th Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of San Diego

To the Deputies and Bishops of the Episcopal Church assembled at the 79th General Convention:

We Are Still In: A Resolution to Fight Climate Change

Resolved, that the 232nd Annual Convention of the Diocese of Massachusetts send the following Memorial to the Deputies and Bishops of the Episcopal Church assembled at the 79th General Convention of The Episcopal Church; and be it further

Resolved, that the 232nd Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts affirms the leadership of Presiding Bishop and Primate of The Episcopal Church, The Most Reverend Michael Curry, in his June 1, 2017, response to President Trump's decision to pull out of the 2015 Paris Climate Accord; and be it further

Resolved, that the 232nd Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts praises the "We Are Still In" declaration in which hundreds of signatories pledge support of the goals of the Paris Climate Accord; and be it further

Resolved, that the 232nd Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts joins with the United Church of Christ in living out the principles of the Paris Climate Accord by committing our time, financial resources and prayers to:

call on our congregations and every person of faith to set a moral example by making decisions of integrity in our energy choices and holding our leaders accountable to likewise reduce carbon emissions;

call on our clergy and lay leaders to speak from the pulpit about our moral obligation to protect God's creation; and

call on our communities of faith to be bold and courageous in proclaiming the urgency of the climate crisis in the public square and at the local, state, and federal levels.

Explanation

The scientific evidence continues to be overwhelming that climate change is real and caused by humans. Its effects are already manifest in the severity and frequency of extreme weather events around the world that disproportionately affect the poor. Almost all scientists agree that we must stabilize the global mean temperature increase to 2° Celsius to avoid catastrophe by instituting significant reductions in global levels of carbon emissions.

In his June 1 statement¹, The Most Reverend Michael Curry calls on the Episcopal Church to continue to take bold action to address the climate crisis, reminding us that we are all trustees and stewards of God's good creation.² The Diocese of Massachusetts has been a leader within the Episcopal Church and our communities in urging divestment of our financial resources from fossil fuel companies and re-investment in carbon-free sources of energy, both with our direct financial investments and in the structures of our houses of worship. We must continue to do so. We are still striving to meet the goals of the Genesis Covenant passed by General Convention in 2009 and affirmed by Diocesan Convention in 2010. The full statement of the Covenant is: "Resolved, the House of Deputies concurring, that the 76th General Convention of the Episcopal Church affirms that The Episcopal Church become a signatory to the Genesis Covenant, thereby making a public commitment to work to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from every facility it

1 <https://www.episcopalchurch.org/posts/publicaffairs/presiding-bishop-presidents-action-and-paris-climate-accord>

2 Genesis 1:26-31

maintains by a minimum of 50% within 10 years” (i.e. by 2019). The Creation Care Initiative is the diocesan response to this covenant, having already helped about 100 of our congregations with over \$900,000 in grants and \$500,000 in loans. This support of the efforts of our congregations should continue.

The “We Are Still In”³ declaration in support of the Paris Accord has so far been signed by the mayors of more than 200 American cities, governors of numerous states, leaders of hundreds of American companies, and many university presidents. They pledge to “pursue ambitious climate goals, working together to take forceful action and to ensure that the US remains a global leader in reducing emissions.”

On June 2, 2017, Bishop Doug Fisher of the Diocese of Western Massachusetts and the Rev. Dr. Jim Antal, Conference Minister and President of the United Church of Christ in Massachusetts, also condemned President Trump's decision to abandon the Paris Climate Accord by signing a statement “An Opportunity for Which the Church Was Born.”⁴ This ecumenical statement, also passed by the leadership of the national UCC Church, affirms, “Our Judeo-Christian heritage teaches that the Earth and its web of life are precious in God’s sight, that the Earth belongs not to us but to God, and that we are entrusted with loving the Earth as God loves it.⁵ As followers of Jesus, we are committed to God’s mission of reconciling people with each other and with the whole of creation.” They added, “[The President’s] decision is scientifically, economically, medically, politically and morally wrong. With heartache we recognize the devastating toll of suffering that will be exacted by this Administration’s refusal to address the climate crisis. We are appalled by the Administration’s unwillingness to join with other nations in protecting and stabilizing the atmosphere upon which our species – and so many other forms of life – depend.” We fully concur.

We must, therefore, in the three-fold challenge of the UCC resolution, “accept the mantle of moral leadership, strive for incarnate change, and proclaim the truth of climate change in the public square.” The alternative is devastating to contemplate.

Respectfully Submitted,

The Rev. Jane B. Bearden, The Rev. William Bradbury, The Rt. Rev. Bud Cederholm, The Rev. Timothy E. Crellin, The Rev. Maggie Geller, The Rev. Elizabeth Good, The Rev. Amy McCreath, Kevin Miller, The Rev. Chris Morck, The Rev. Barbara A. Peterson, The Rev. Dr. Jennifer Phillips, The Rev. Laurie Rofinot, The Rev. Barbara Smith-Moran, Dawn Tesorero, The Rev. Evan Thayer, The Rev. Deb Warner, Sylvia Weston, Lauren Zook, The Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts

3 www.WeAreStillIn.org

4 <http://www.macucc.org/newsdetail/opportunity-for-which-the-church-was-born-8390216>

5 Genesis 1-2:3, Psalm 24, and Genesis 2:15

We Are Still In: A Resolution to Fight Climate Change

Submitted to the Episcopal Diocese of Western Massachusetts, 116th Convention, 2017

Sponsored by: The Social Justice Commission and the Missioner for Creation Care

Resolved, that the 116th Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Western Massachusetts affirms the leadership of Presiding Bishop and Primate of The Episcopal Church, The Most Reverend Michael Curry, in his June 1, 2017, response to President Trump's decision to pull out of the 2015 Paris Climate Accord; and be it further

Resolved, that the 116th Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Western Massachusetts praises the "We Are Still In" declaration, in which hundreds of signatories pledge support of the goals of the Paris Climate Accord; and be it further

Resolved, that the 116th Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Western Massachusetts joins with the United Church of Christ in living out the principles of the Paris Climate Accord by committing our time, financial resources, and prayers to:

- call on our congregations and every person of faith to set a moral example by making decisions of integrity in our energy choices and holding our leaders accountable to likewise reduce carbon emissions;
- call on our clergy and lay leaders to speak from the pulpit about our moral obligation to protect God's creation; and
- call on our communities of faith to be bold and courageous in proclaiming the urgency of the climate crisis in the public square and at the local, state, and federal levels.

Resolved, that the Secretary of the 116th Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Western Massachusetts forward this resolution to the Secretary of TEC's General Convention for consideration at the 2018 TEC General Convention.

Explanation: The scientific evidence continues to be overwhelming that climate change is real and caused by humans. Its effects are already manifest in the severity and frequency of extreme weather events around the world that disproportionately affect the poor. Almost all scientists agree that we must stabilize the global mean temperature increase to 2° Celsius to avoid catastrophe by instituting significant reductions in global levels of carbon emissions.

In his June 1 statement, The Most Reverend Michael Curry calls on the Episcopal Church to continue to take bold action to address the climate crisis, reminding us that we are all trustees and stewards of God's good creation.¹ The Diocese of Western Massachusetts has been a leader within the Episcopal Church in its urging Church Pension Fund, the Investment Committee of the Executive Council, and the Episcopal Church Foundation to divest financial resources from fossil fuel companies and to re-invest in carbon-free sources of energy. The diocese passed such a resolution at its 113th Convention, "Eliminating Fossil Fuel Holdings and Investing in Clean Energy." The Trustees of the Diocese of Western Massachusetts also voted in 2014 to align their investments more

¹ Genesis 1:26-31

closely with their faith and values by reducing their exposure to fossil fuels and to invest in renewable energy projects as objectives for the portfolio going forward.

The Diocese of Western Massachusetts has also taken leadership in the Episcopal Church by creating in 2014 a diocesan-level position, Missioner for Creation Care, a position that has since become ecumenical. Starting in 2014 the diocese began observing an annual Season of Creation (October 4, the Feast of St. Francis, through the end of November), which encourages preaching and prayer, sacrificial acts of generosity, and bold public witness to strengthen our Christian response to the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor. Annually, the Creation Season webpage provides resources to ACT, ADVOCATE, LEARN, and PRAY. These resources include tools for implementing this resolution.

So far, the “We Are Still In”² declaration in support of the Paris Accord has been signed by the mayors of more than 200 American cities, governors of numerous states, leaders of hundreds of American companies, and many university presidents. They pledge to “pursue ambitious climate goals, working together to take forceful action and to ensure that the US remains a global leader in reducing emissions.”

On June 2, 2017, Bishop Doug Fisher of the Diocese of Western Massachusetts, the Rev. Dr. Jim Antal (Conference Minister and President, United Church of Christ in Massachusetts), and the Rev. Dr. Margaret Bullitt-Jonas (Missioner for Creation Care, Diocese of Western Massachusetts and Massachusetts Conference, United Church of Christ) also condemned President Donald Trump's decision to abandon the Paris Climate Accords by signing a statement, “An Opportunity for which the Church Was Born.” This ecumenical statement, which was also passed by the national leadership of the United Church of Christ, affirms, “Our Judeo-Christian heritage teaches that the Earth and its web of life are precious in God’s sight, that the Earth belongs not to us but to God, and that we are entrusted with loving the Earth as God loves it.³ As followers of Jesus, we are committed to God’s mission of reconciling people with each other and with the whole of creation.” The statement declared, “[The President’s] decision is scientifically, economically, medically, politically and morally wrong. With heartache we recognize the devastating toll of suffering that will be exacted by this Administration’s refusal to address the climate crisis. We are appalled by the Administration’s unwillingness to join with other nations in protecting and stabilizing the atmosphere upon which our species – and so many other forms of life – depend.” We fully concur.

We must, therefore, in the three-fold challenge of the document, “An Opportunity for Which the Church Was Born,” and of the analogous statement from the United Church of Christ, “accept the mantle of moral leadership,” strive to “incarnate change,” and “proclaim the truth [of climate change] in the public square.” The alternative is devastating to contemplate.

² www.WeAreStillIn.org

³ Genesis 1-2:3, Psalm 24, and Genesis 2:15

To the Deputies and Bishops of The Episcopal Church assembled at the 79th General Convention:

The current political climate can be described as tumultuous, at best. Tumultuous for the immigrant and migrant families that are being torn apart, for the women whose reproductive rights and health benefits are being strategically stripped away, and for the exploited, harassed, and abused women within the workplace. So much upheaval can make it seem easier to remain silent rather than speak up. But as members of the Episcopal branch of the Jesus Movement, we do not have the luxury of turning a blind eye. Our call as Christians extends outside of our church walls because we interact and live within the systems and institutions of the greater society. It is our responsibility to call out injustices when we see them, to advocate for people who are most vulnerable, and to support and create policies that align with our values.

In particular, we call your attention to four resolutions: *Reducing Sexual Harassment, Assault, and Exploitation in the Workplace; Recognizing and Ending Domestic Violence in our Congregations; Halt the Intensification and Implementation of Immigration Policies and Practices that are Harmful to Migrant Women and Children; and Equal Access to Health Care Regardless of Gender.* As you review and deliberate resolutions, we ask that space be held for honoring the particularities of identity that make us whole. To remember that the richness of our humanity is fluid, and consists of blurred lines that intersect race, class, gender, and all the other ways that we identify ourselves. Right now, women of color, low-income women, transgender women, and immigrant women are most susceptible to abuse, harassment, and exploitation in every space that they occupy. It is imperative to remember that we are our most vulnerable. We are them, and they are us—there is no Other. Our humanity is dependent upon our embodiment of this.

We can remember that Jesus healed others not when it was convenient or even when it was lawful. Jesus healed in the moment that healing was called for. This is our moment to offer healing and to bring our laws closer to the justice and equity that God envisions for us.

Respectfully submitted,

Social Justice for Women Subcommittee members of the Special Committee on Sexual Harassment and Exploitation

Submitted by Lindsey Ardrey, Diocese of Louisiana and endorsed by Laura Russell, Diocese of Newark and Jennifer Allen, Diocese of Kansas.