

TASK FORCE ON TRANSLATION AND INTERPRETATION

Members

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| The Rt. Rev. Lucinda Ashby, Chair | El Camino Real, VIII | 2024 |
| The Rev. Roberto Maldonado-Mercado, Vice-Chair | San Diego, VIII | 2027 |
| Amy Waltz-Reasonover, Secretary | Texas, VII | 2027 |
| The Rt. Rev. Lloyd Allen | Honduras, IX | 2027 |
| The Rev. Gabriel Atem | Utah, VIII | 2024 |
| Ms. Bernice David | | 2024 |
| Ms. Iris DiLeonardo | | 2024 |
| Sra. Blanca Echeverry | Colombia, IX | 2027 |
| The Right Rev. Hector Monterroso | Texas, VII | 2027 |
| Rev. Nathanael Saint-Pierre | | 2027 |
| The Rev. Irene Tanabe | Olympia, VIII | 2027 |
| | Convocation of Episcopal Churches in | 2024 |
| The Rt. Rev. Pierre Whalon | Europe, II | |
| Mr. Kurt, Ex Officio | New York, II | |
| Ms. Julia Ayala Harris, Ex Officio | Oklahoma, VII | |
| The Most Rev. Michael Curry, Ex Officio | North Carolina, IV | |

Acknowledgements

The Taskforce wishes to extend special thanks to Diane Lynch and Cecy Alomia who have been serving as interpreters for our meetings. We also thank the Rt. Rev. Scott Hayashi and the prior Taskforce that laid the foundation for our work by drafting the Translation and Interpretation policies for Executive Council (G0035, April 23, 2022).

Mandate

2022 - A024 Create a Task Force on Translation and Interpretation

Resolved, the House of Bishops concurring,

That the 80th General Convention, pursuant to Joint Rule IX.22, create a Task Force on Translation and Interpretation, whose mandate includes, but is not limited to, (1) development of a working strategy and criteria for determining and prioritizing the types of materials (media releases, resources, reports, etc.) pertaining to church life to be translated and meetings related to governance to be interpreted and into which languages; (2) establishment of criteria for assuring the quality of translations and interpretation, employing dynamic equivalence, and establish procedures and criteria for hiring professional translators and interpreters to assure high-quality translations and interpretations; (3) consultation with non-English speaking dioceses, jurisdictions, and area missions about their needs and priorities for translations and interpretation; and (4) recommendation of funding levels necessary to implement the strategy; and be it further

Resolved, That the task force begin its work no later than January 1, 2023, with the task concluding its work at the conclusion of the 82nd General Convention, unless its mandate is extended by the 82nd Convention; and be it further

Resolved, That the task force report annually to Executive Council and provide an interim report to the 81st General Convention and a final report with recommendations to the 82nd General Convention; and be it further

Resolved, That the membership of this task force be appointed by the Presiding Bishop and the President of the House of Deputies and include up to three Bishops appointed by the Presiding Bishop for five-year terms, with special consideration given to inclusion of Bishops from non-English speaking dioceses and jurisdictions; up to three Clergy and up to three Lay Persons appointed by the President of the House of Deputies for five-year terms, with special consideration given to inclusion of persons from non-English speaking dioceses, jurisdictions, and mission areas; up to two members of the Standing Commission on World Mission (SCWM) appointed by the SCWM; and one member of the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music (SCLM) appointed by the SCLM; and be it further

Resolved, That the Executive Officer of General Convention appoint a member of the staff from the General Convention Office and the Presiding Bishop appoint a member of staff from the Language Services Department of the Office of Communications to serve as consultants to the task force; and be it further

Resolved, That \$90,000 be budgeted for the implementation of this resolution, of which \$30,000 would be allocated to the first triennium of the task force's work.

Summary of Work

The 80th General Convention charged this Taskforce with developing procedures to implement Resolution A024 whose mandate includes: developing a working strategy for determining and prioritizing the types of materials to be translated and meetings to be interpreted, criteria for qualities of translation and interpretation and into which languages, consultation with dioceses and areas that are non-English-speaking, and recommendation for funding levels to implement these strategies. The Taskforce is set to conclude its work in 2027.

The charge given this Taskforce is broad and complex. In order to address the needs and issues of Translation and Interpretation, the Taskforce is very clear that “translation” refers to written documents, while “interpretation” refers to spoken words. While written documents are translated into standardized language, interpretation allows for linguistic variations—regionalisms and dialects.

The Taskforce has met twice in-person and three more times virtually thus far during this biennium. In our meetings we have accomplished the following:

- Developed a matrix to determine the types of materials to be translated, the criteria for the level of expertise of the translation, and why the translations is necessary. We are clear that liturgical documents are not the purview of this taskforce at this point, although we note that they require professionalism and are field specific—requiring the expertise of a liturgist.
- Sent a survey to assess what languages are needed for translation. We note that the mandate from the Executive Council focuses on English, Spanish, French, Haitian Creole and Mandarin. However, we are aware that there are more languages spoken and read in The Episcopal Church. To that end, in May and June of 2023, we sent a survey to all dioceses to ask about languages spoken, languages needed for worship, other materials needed in specific languages. We received 169 total responses from a variety of dioceses, which while helpful, did not yet enable us to determine the actual need of smaller language groups that may be scattered in different places. For example, there may be small group that needs translation in Tagalog in one place, and another small group far away with the same need; yet together, they may comprise a significant language group. The question remains for us as to how to access that information throughout the church.

An ongoing challenge is to understand the ways in which translation and interpretation needs are funded within the budget, and the expense of translating specific materials. For example, we learned that to translate the General Convention Blue Book into Spanish costs @\$125,000. Additionally, we have become aware that some requests for Language Services are line items in the overall budget, while others are department specific and included in that departmental budget. It is clear that some work needs to be done to ensure that actual expenses for translation and interpretation can be easily tracked.

While the technical aspects of our work are evident, broader questions are being raised. These include questions of inclusion and justice which are at the very heart of our baptismal covenant.

The following questions need to be considered:

- How does one measure and determine which translations into which languages are more important?
- What issues of race and class inform decisions about translation and interpretation?
- How do we continue to assess language needs, determined by immigration patterns in our world?
- How do we address the question of mutuality so that materials (educational materials, for example) are shared across languages and cultures?
- What plan needs to be in place so that The Episcopal Church continues to evaluate budgeting and the work of Language Services is fluid and adaptive?

The work of the Taskforce is broad in scope and grounded in Baptismal Covenant. The question that we need to continue to ask ourselves is: what is Jesus doing and what will Jesus continue to be doing in this work that is invaluable to building up the Body of Christ (Ephesians 4:12)?

Budget Request for Language Services for the 2025-2027 Triennium: \$1,500,000

Budget Request for the work of the Taskforce on Translation and Interpretation: \$50,000