

OFFICE OF
DEVELOPMENT

Looking Ahead to General Convention



The Church at Work asked the Rev. Canon Michael Barlowe, Executive Officer of the General Convention:

What is the General Convention and why is it important?

The General Convention is the governing body of The Episcopal Church that meets every three years. It is a

bicameral legislature that includes the House of Deputies and the House of Bishops, composed of deputies and bishops from each diocese. During its regular meeting, deputies and bishops consider a wide range of important matters facing the church. In the interim between triennial meetings, various committees, commissions, agencies, boards, and task forces created by the General Convention meet to implement the decisions and carry on the work of the General Convention.

The first General Convention of The Episcopal Church took place in 1785 in Philadelphia.

When will the next convention be held?

The 80th convening of the General Convention was scheduled to take place in Baltimore, Maryland, in July 2021. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the convention was rescheduled to July 2022. This is the second time in the church's history that General Convention was rescheduled; the first was due to the yellow fever outbreak in Philadelphia in the 1790s.

What will be different about the convention in this time of the COVID-19 pandemic?

The 80th General Convention will be shorter than in recent years, and the draft schedule reflects a desire to use the time we have together in a balance of legislative work, worship, inspiration from invited guests, hospitality, and the joy of seeing friends old and new and colleagues in ministry from around the church. The House of Deputies will be electing a new president and vice president, marking a change in leadership for the first time since 2012. Convention will hear testimonials and proposals related to all of the church's priorities.

This may sound like business as usual, but it will be done in a context that adheres to enhanced health and safety guidance that the pandemic has made necessary. Physical arrangements will take into account the need for social distancing, and there are likely to be a number of safeguards required of all those attending. These measures will be publicized once a final determination is made by the Joint Standing Committee on Planning and Arrangements, the group that oversees the logistics of General Convention.

Where can I find more information about the General Convention?

Visit generalconvention.org/about for more details.



General Convention Reports on Grants

You have a big idea, one that will have an impact beyond your church's walls. Your idea could be a community garden that addresses food insecurity or a concept for a New Episcopal Community that will provide seekers with a new avenue to know Jesus' love. What you don't have are the financial resources to turn the idea into a plan, and the plan into a program.

In preparation for General Convention this summer, the Blue Book (which reports in detail committee mandates and accomplishments) quietly reports on The Episcopal Church's ability to impact local communities and parishes through the awarding of grants. Big ideas are identified, funded, and nurtured, ideas that would have otherwise withered on the vine.

In 2018 the Task Force on Care of Creation and Environmental Racism was empowered by the General Convention to administer a small-grants program to support creation ministries and eco-justice projects. The task force awarded 26 first-round grants in 2020, totaling \$179,824.

Awards went to large projects to repurpose open space for green burials down to community gardens and food justice initiatives championed by small parishes. This task force is preparing to award 2021 grants that will focus on longer-term collaborations that include civic engagement and policy advocacy. Over

\$170,000 in grant funds will be distributed in the second cycle.

The Task Force on Church Planting and Congregational Redevelopment is also committed to supporting big ideas that seek to advance the Jesus Movement. Its grants support New Episcopal Communities helping people, who may not yet be Christians or Episcopalians, grow in faith and life, grounded in the doctrine and discipline of The Episcopal Church. Using a structured paradigm that helps individuals and parishes discern thoughtfully and grow intentionally, the task force distributed 103 grants, representing 41 dioceses, totaling over \$1,000,000.

These grants reflect the creativity and vibrancy of an Episcopal Church that looks like Jesus, by supporting individuals and parishes to do big things in their communities that encourage their neighbors to come and see!



Photo: Archival image of a General Convention meeting, 1970, women first included in the House of Deputies

Come and See! A Conversation with the Presiding Bishop and Canons

Over 1,000 folks registered to join a Zoom conversation featuring Presiding Bishop Michael B. Curry and his canons on Dec. 9. The conversation began with the presiding bishop sharing his vision for a church that looks like Jesus and then explored the ways that his vision is translated into policy and action by his canons. Deftly moderated by the Rev. Winnie Varghese, recently installed rector at St. Luke's Episcopal Church, Atlanta, the lively hourlong conversation touched on many of the church's ministries. Each canon spoke with clarity and enthusiasm for how they are integrating the presiding bishop's vision into their work. The Rev. E. Mark Stevenson, canon for Ministry Within The Episcopal Church, spoke about the importance of listening to dioceses and parishes and helping them identify

and leverage resources within their communities. The Rev. Stephanie Spellers, canon for evangelism, reconciliation, and creation care, shared new programming initiatives around Becoming Beloved Community and expansion of the Sacred Ground curriculum. The Rev. C. K. Robertson, canon for Ministry Beyond The Episcopal Church, shared the ways that The Episcopal Church is building bridges beyond our own traditions.

The conversation was packed with powerful testaments to the love of Jesus and a touch of humor that left the participants looking forward to the next online event featuring the presiding bishop and his canons.

What to Know About Planned Giving in 2022

T.J. Houlihan, Associate Director of Development

Recently, I've been having conversations with my mother about her finances and retirement plans. I'll admit they haven't been easy. Not only is it hard to push the boundaries of the parent/child relationship, it's hard to talk about end-of-life planning, period. However, it's been good in so many other ways in that I've learned more about the things she cares about and wants to ensure are still supported, like "endowing her pledge" at her parish and remembering her favorite charities. She knows that that final act of support has the power to help many people and continue to build up God's kingdom long after she's gone.

Just as your support has enabled us to help so many people, your gifts to The Episcopal Church move us toward becoming a church that looks and acts like Jesus—whether it be our chaplains bravely serving through Armed Forces and Federal Ministries, to Creation Care, to the holy work of welcoming refugees and migrants through Episcopal Migration Ministries. With your continued generosity, we can continue our efforts to transform the lives of others.

We know that relationships are two-way streets. That's why we want you to know about the financial tools you can use to plan your gift to us so that it can return benefits to you.

In upcoming newsletters, you'll be hearing about gift plans that can go to work for you. I'll share how the right planned gift can increase your income, provide cash to help you move into a retirement facility, or give you a tax deduction in return for items that you can no longer use or maintain. A planned gift can provide benefits to your family and loved ones and can be a useful tool in your overall financial planning.



For instance, did you know that:

- You can make a gift using appreciated securities and realize larger tax savings than if you had used cash?
- You can make a gift that costs you nothing during your lifetime?
- You can make a gift that pays you income for life?
- You can preserve your estate for your children and deliver years of income to the Episcopal Church?
- You can donate your house, take a tax deduction, and continue to live in it rent-free?
- You can turn surplus life insurance coverage into a gift?

Please keep watching here for more information about gift plans that can deliver all those benefits and more to you. If any of the discussed methods of giving sound interesting to you, please contact me for further details—with no obligation on your part, of course.

Your gift to the Church can give back to you. I look forward to showing you how.

If you'd like to learn more about remembering The Episcopal Church in your will, contact T.J. Houlihan at (212) 716-6271 or thoulihan@episcopalchurch.org. This article is intended to provide general gift planning information. The Office of Development is not qualified to provide specific legal, tax or investment advice, and this publication should not be looked to or relied upon as a source for such advice. As always, consult with your own legal and financial advisors before making any gifts.

Your gifts to The Episcopal Church Annual Appeal and other ministries make a significant difference. We are so thankful for your generosity as we seek to walk in the way of Jesus through our missions and ministries.

WAYS TO GIVE

ONLINE:

iam.ec/blessgiving

BY PHONE:

(800) 334-7626 ext. 6002

GROUND MAIL:

Use the enclosed envelope or mail to:
DFMS-Protestant Episcopal Church US
PO Box 958983
St. Louis MO 63195-8983

SCAN



Prayer/Meditation

Give us grace, O Lord, to answer readily the call of our Savior Jesus Christ and proclaim to all people the Good News of his salvation, that we and whole world may perceive the glory of his marvelous works.

Feast Days



February 8
Bakhita
(Josephine Margaret Bakhita) Bakhita was a Sudanese-Italian Canossian religious sister active in Italy for 45 years, after having been enslaved in Sudan.



February 17
Janani Luwum, Archbishop and Martyr, 1977
The Archbishop was martyred in 1977 at the direction of Idi Amin, the autocratic president of Uganda. Reportedly Luwum's last words to his fellow bishops before being taken away "Do not be afraid. I see God's hand in this."

Parishes and Pews

Photo Essay: Episcopalians across the United States



1. Jayan Koshy (ordained in the Diocese of Minnesota), the Rev. Katie Ernst, Transfiguration Minneapolis

2. Azita Jolaei, Holy Nativity Church Garden, Westchester

3. St. Luke's in the Desert, Farmington, New Mexico

4. Mission of San Jose Obrero (Saint Joseph the Worker), the Rt. Rev. Craig Loya, bishop of Minnesota

5. Saint Luke's Church, Long Beach, California, the Rev. Jane Gould, rector

6. Deacon in Diocese of North Dakota & member of the Standing Rock Leadership Team and Executive Council, the Rev. Angela Goodhouse-Mauai

7. Eliza Sablan, former guest and current volunteer, and the Rev. Canon Britt Olson, St. Luke's Church, Seattle

8. St. Stephen's Church Edina, Minnesota, the Rev. Amelia Arthur and the Rev. Tom Cook (rector)

All images courtesy of David Rider



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