

A Resolution of the Vestry and Rector  
St. Martin's Episcopal Church  
Houston, Texas

**WHEREAS**, St. Martin's Episcopal Church continues to uphold the Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church in the United States of America and the Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Diocese of Texas, and;

**WHEREAS**, The Constitution of the Episcopal Church in the United States of America, clearly states that it "*...is a constituent member of the Anglican Communion, a Fellowship within the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church...in communion with the See of Canterbury...*"<sup>1</sup>, and;

**WHEREAS**, the Vestry and Rector of St. Martin's recognize the deep divisions that continue to exist within the global Anglican family, specifically around issues related to the consecration of bishops or ordination of clergy who may be sexually active outside of heterosexual marriage; proposals to support the blessing of same sex unions; and uninvited incursions by Archbishops and Bishops from Provinces and Dioceses into the Episcopal Church for the specific purpose of schismatically drawing clergy and parishes out of The Episcopal Church; and

**WHEREAS**, we continue to affirm, as we have in unanimously passed Vestry Resolutions on 3 February, 2007 and again on 16 October, 2007, that we believe the pathway toward healing these deep divisions is working alongside the global Anglican community, specifically by honoring the Windsor Process and the principles set forth in Lambeth Resolution 1.10; and

**WHEREAS**, the present "mind" of the Primates of the Communion is to continue to honor the Windsor Process, Lambeth Resolution 1.10, and specifically to continue to honor three moratoria regarding candidates for ordination, liturgies for same sex unions, or uninvited and/or unauthorized incursions and visitations by clergy for the purposes of creating new Dioceses or Provinces for the next five years until, and if, a solution can be reached that would not further tear the fabric of unity both in the global Anglican community as well as the Episcopal Church;<sup>2</sup> and

**WHEREAS**, we continue to recognize the gravity of this moment in the history of the Anglican Communion and the Episcopal Church, affirming the Statement of The Archbishop of Canterbury "*...that the existence of our Communion is truly a gift of God to the wholeness of Christ's Church and that all of us will be seriously wounded and diminished if our Communion fractures any further,*"<sup>3</sup> and

**WHEREAS**, *The Constitution and Canons of The Diocese of Texas* affirm that "*All members of the clergy, having subscribed to the Declaration required by Article VIII of the Constitution of the Episcopal Church, shall be under obligation to model in their own lives the received teaching of the Church that all of its members are to abstain from sexual relations outside Holy Matrimony...*"<sup>4</sup> and "*Holy Matrimony shall mean the physical and spiritual union of a man and a woman, entered into within the community of faith, by mutual consent of the heart, mind and will, and with the intent that it be lifelong; and the moral qualifications of a person, as that term is used in the Canons of the Episcopal Church, shall include conformity to the obligation...*"<sup>5</sup>, and

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<sup>1</sup> Preamble, *Constitution & Canons*, (New York: Church Publishing Incorporated, 2000), p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Rachel Zoll, "Anglican Seek Extended Moratorium on Gay Bishops," *AP*, 6 February, 2009.

<sup>3</sup> Archbishop of Canterbury, Advent Letter, 2007, sec. 2.

<sup>4</sup> Canon 43, 43.1.

<sup>5</sup> Canon 43, 43.2.

**WHEREAS**, our Bishop, The Right Reverend C. Andrew Doyle, has stated *“Let me reaffirm my insistence on leadership in harmony with the Windsor Report. Our Global Communion has not changed its teaching on sexuality,”*<sup>6</sup> and

**WHEREAS**, at the close of the 75<sup>th</sup> General Convention of the Episcopal Church, the approved Resolution BO33 enjoined the Episcopal Church not to consecrate any person to the episcopate that might present further strain to the bonds of the Communion, and

**WHEREAS**, Archbishop Rowan Williams said in his closing press conference at the recent meeting of the Anglican Consultative Council in Jamaica that *“Action to negate that resolution [BO33] would instantly suggest to many people in the communion that the Episcopal Church would prefer not to go down the route of closer structural bonds and that particular kind of mutual responsibility,”*<sup>7</sup> and

**WHEREAS**, there are several proposed resolutions and proposed changes to the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church to come before the 76<sup>th</sup> General Convention in Anaheim, California, (a partial list of which is attached) that would violate the requested moratoria, contradict the recommendations of the Windsor Report, and stand opposed to the Canons of the Diocese of Texas as well as the mind and heart of our Bishop,

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT**, the Vestry and Rector of St. Martin’s reaffirm its identity as a “Windsor Parish” within the Episcopal Diocese of Texas and the Episcopal Church in the United States of America, including, but not limited to Lambeth Resolution, 1.10; and

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that we support the requested moratoria noted above; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we support the leadership of our Bishop, the Right Reverend C. Andrew Doyle, and his clarity on these matters related to human sexuality; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we earnestly request that our duly elected Deputies and Alternates to the 76<sup>th</sup> General Convention, not support or approve any measure (i.e. resolution, Canon or statement) that would contradict the requested moratoria, the Canons of the Diocese of Texas, or the position of our Bishop or create further divisions within The Episcopal Church or global Anglican family; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we assure our Bishops, The Right Reverend C. Andrew Doyle, The Right Reverend Dena A. Harrison and The Right Reverend Rayford B. High, Jr., that we wish to do all we can to promote unity within the Body of Christ, the Anglican Church, The Episcopal Church and The Diocese of Texas, as we believe it is the calling of our Lord that “all may be one,”<sup>8</sup> and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we will resist any effort or movement that would further tear the fabric of this unity or further divide St. Martin’s from its constituent membership in The Diocese of Texas, The Episcopal Church and The Anglican Communion, and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that a copy of this resolution be sent to each of our Bishops, Deputies, Alternates, The Presiding Bishop’s Office and the office of The Archbishop of Canterbury.

Unanimously approved by the Vestry and Rector of St. Martin’s, on this 16<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2009.

Mr. Jim Chandler  
Senior Warden, 2009

Mr. Scott Galloway  
Junior Warden, 2009

The Rev. Dr. Russell J. Levenson, Jr.  
Rector, St. Martin’s Church

<sup>6</sup> Bishop Doyle’s Address to the 160<sup>th</sup> Diocesan Council, *The Proceedings of the 160<sup>th</sup> Annual Council*, Volume II, p. 34.

<sup>7</sup> [http://www.episcopalchurch.org/79901\\_107504\\_ENG\\_HTM.htm](http://www.episcopalchurch.org/79901_107504_ENG_HTM.htm).

<sup>8</sup> John 17:21.

Mr. Larry McAfee  
*Treasurer, 2009*

Mr. Mark Barineau  
*Vestry Clerk, 2009*

Mr. Andy Harvin  
*St. Martin's Chancellor*

Members of St. Martin's Vestry:

Mr. David Anders

Mrs. Bitsey Hail

Mrs. Lisa Heston

Mr. Larry Lehman

Mr. Fred Meyer

Mrs. Leslie Miller

Mr. Billy Murphy

Mr. Ed Neuhaus

Mr. Bert Smith

Mrs. Ginya Trier

Appointed Representatives to the Vestry:

Mrs. Edith van Wageningen  
*St. Martin's Altar Guild President*

Mrs. Laura Beavers  
*St. Martin's ECW President*

Mr. Mike Fuqua  
*Men of St. Martin's President*

Mr. Jeff Sills  
*St. Martin's Usher Representative to the Vestry*

Mr. Bob Baze  
*President, St. Martin's Senior Council*

Mr. Tad Mayfield  
*Senior Council Representative to the Vestry*

**A Partial Listing of Proposed Resolutions and Canonical Changes to Come Before the  
76<sup>th</sup> General Convention of The Episcopal Church**

C004:

*Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, That the 76th General Convention affirm that there are no restrictions on a diocesan bishop's authorization of the liturgical blessing of committed relationships between same-sex partners.

C007:

*Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, That this 76th General Convention affirms that standing committees and bishops with jurisdiction are not bound by any extra-canonical restraints-including but not limited to the restraints set forth in Resolution B033 passed by the 75th General Convention-when considering consents to the ordination of any candidate to the episcopate.

C009:

*Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, That the 76th General Convention of The Episcopal Church authorize the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music to develop appropriate rites for the celebration and blessing of the sacred unions of gay and lesbian persons, taking into account the variety of civil arrangements for such unions available in the regions served by the church; and be it further

*Resolved*, That such rite or rites shall be presented at the 77th General Convention of the Episcopal Church.

C010:

*Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, That the 76th General Convention of The Episcopal Church recognize that the usefulness of Resolution B033 as passed by the 75th General Convention of The Episcopal Church has run its course; and be it further

*Resolved*, That the 76th General Convention of The Episcopal Church herewith repeal Resolution B033 as passed by the 75th General Convention of The Episcopal Church; and, be it further

*Resolved*, That The Episcopal Church acknowledges with regret the further oppression visited on the lesbian and gay members of this church by Resolution B033 and its application; and apologizes for the potentially negative impact of said resolution on the ability to respond to the vocational call by the Holy Spirit to the episcopate of any members of this church; and be it further

*Resolved*, That The Episcopal Church expresses its appreciation to the lesbian and gay members of this church for their patience during this time of discernment for the church; and be it further

*Resolved*, That in the call to see the face of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in each other, this church pledges its utmost effort to keep all parties "at the table" as The Episcopal Church continues to insure the full participation of all of God's children in the life of this church.

C015:

*Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, That the 76th General Convention affirm that standing committees and bishops with jurisdiction are not bound by any extra-canonical restraints-including but

*not limited to the restraints set forth in Resolution B033 passed by the 75th General Convention-when considering consents to the ordination of any candidate to the episcopate.*

C017:

*Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, That the 76th General Convention direct the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music to develop and authorize same-sex union blessing rites.

C019:

*Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, That this 76th General Convention make the following modifications to the canons:

*Canon 18: Of the Solemnization of Holy Matrimony, be amended to substitute the words “two persons” where the words “a man and a woman” appear;*

*Canon 19: Of Regulations Respecting Holy Matrimony: Concerning Preservation of Marriage, Dissolution of Marriage, and Remarriage be amended to substitute the word “spouse” where the words “husband or wife” appear; and be it further*

*Resolved*, That this Convention does not authorize any additional public rites for the Pastoral Offices of Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage or The Blessing of a Civil Marriage but notes that, subject to the direction of the diocesan and in accordance with the canons, the rites set forth in those offices may be modified when the needs of the congregation so require.

C024:

*Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, That the 76th General Convention affirm that standing committees and bishops with jurisdiction are bound only by the rules set forth in the canons when considering consents to the ordination of any candidate to the episcopate and are admonished to consent only to those candidates who are committed to upholding the canons.

C025:

*Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, That the 76th General Convention make the following modification to the canons:

*Canon III.9.5(c.1) is hereby amended to read as follows:*

*It shall be the duty of the Rector or Priest-in-Charge to record in the Parish Register all Baptisms, Confirmations (including the canonical equivalents in Canon I.17.1(d)), Marriages, Civil Unions and Burials.*

C028:

*Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, That this 76th General Convention direct the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music to prepare, for consideration by the 77th General Convention, additional gender-neutral language for The Book of Common Prayer pastoral offices titled “The Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage,” “The Blessing of a Civil Marriage,” and “An Order of Marriage” (pages 422 through 438). These adapted liturgies could be made available for use until such time as they might be considered for incorporation into a future Book of Common Prayer.

C031:

*Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, That 76th General Convention direct the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music to prepare rites of holy union for same-gender couples for consideration by the 77th General Convention; and be it further

*Resolved*, That such rites should reflect the legal contexts in which such holy unions might take place; and be it further

*Resolved*, That the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music devise an open and transparent process for the conduct of its work, inviting participation from dioceses and individuals who have already engaged in such liturgical and theological work and inviting theological reflection from all interested parties in The Episcopal Church and the provinces of the Anglican Communion.

C039:

*Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, That the 76th General Convention of The Episcopal Church call upon Standing Committees and bishops with jurisdiction to conform to the non-discrimination provisions of Canon III.1.2 when considering consents to Episcopal elections, which states: “No person shall be denied access to the discernment process for any ministry, lay or ordained, in this Church because of race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, disabilities or age, except as otherwise provided by these Canons.”

C041:

*Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, That Canon I.18.2 is hereby amended to read as follows

*Sec. 2 (b) That both parties understand that Holy Matrimony is a physical and spiritual union of ~~a man and a woman~~ two adults, entered into within the community of faith, by mutual consent of heart, mind, and will, and with intent that it be lifelong; and be it further*

*Resolved*, That Canon I.18.3 is hereby amended to read as follows

*Sec. 3 (e) “We, A.B. and C.D., desiring to receive the blessing of Holy Matrimony in the Church, do solemnly declare that we hold marriage to be a lifelong union of ~~husband and wife~~ two adults as it is set forth in the Book of Common Prayer.*

*(f) “We believe that the union of ~~husband and wife~~ two adults, in heart, body, and mind, is intended by God for their mutual joy; for the help and comfort given one another in prosperity and adversity; and, when it is God’s will, for the procreation of children and their nurture in the knowledge and love of the Lord.*

C045:

*Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, That the 76th General Convention of The Episcopal Church proclaim the Gospel that in Christ all God’s children, including transgender, bisexual, lesbian and gay persons are full and equal participants in the life of Christ’s church; and be it further

*Resolved*, That this Church is committed to compliance with Canon III.1.2, which supports the full and equal participation of all persons regardless of sexual orientation in all aspects of the Church’s ministries, lay and ordained; and be it further

*Resolved*, That the 76th General Convention of The Episcopal Church direct the Commission on Liturgy and Music to develop a liturgical rite for blessing of same sex unions.

C054:

*Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, That the 76th General Convention of The Episcopal Church regret the discrimination against some candidates for the episcopate expressed in Resolution B033 of the 75th General Convention (2006) and the hurt and alienation felt by some because of that discrimination; and be it further

*Resolved*, That the 76th General Convention reject the interpretation of that resolution made by the House of Bishops at its meeting in September 2007.

C055:

*Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, That the 75th General Convention support and uphold persons in same-gender committed relationships of enduring love, mutuality, and fidelity; and be it further

*Resolved*, that the term “sexual orientation” in Title III, Canon 1, Section 2, shall protect all persons from denial of access to the discernment process for any ministry, lay or ordained, in this Church solely on the basis of being in such a relationship.

C056:

*Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, That the 76th General Convention charge the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music with development of liturgies of blessing for same-gender commitments to be presented to the next triennial General Convention in 2012 for inclusion in “Book of Occasional Services”; and. be it further

*Resolved*, That in the meantime the Ecclesiastical Authority of each diocese may authorize for use in the diocese liturgies for blessing same-gender committed relationships of enduring love, mutuality, and fidelity; and be it further

*Resolved*, That, with respect to such blessings, no bishop or clergy of this Church or any other person acting on behalf of this Church shall be required or expected to perform an act contrary to a deeply-held position of conscience.