

2016 RES 2 AFFIRMATION OF THE CHARTER FOR LIFELONG CHRISTIAN FORMATION

Resolved, that the 146th Convention of the Diocese of Central Pennsylvania adopt and affirm The Charter for Lifelong Christian Formation adopted at the 76th General Convention of the Episcopal Church and endorsed by the 78th General convention of the Episcopal Church, commending the ministry of Christian Formation in The Episcopal Church; and be it further

Resolved, that the 146th Convention of Diocese of Central Pennsylvania endorse the vocational importance of inviting, inspiring, and transforming all people, lay and ordained, in the Christian Faith through developing, encouraging, enhancing and engaging the work of the Stevenson School for Ministry to support and provide resources to parishes to live out their comprehensive and collaborative lifelong Christian Formation ministries for all ages and stages that reflect and embody *The Charter*.

Explanation:

The Episcopal Church engages in God's mission through the ministry of all its members, which is dependent on the formation and education of all ages – children (0-12), youth (13-18), young adults (18-35), adults (over 35) and older adults. For The Episcopal Church to achieve its objective in the Diocese of Central PA a comprehensive and coordinated lifelong formation plan needs to be available to our congregations and diocese. The Charter for Lifelong Christian Formation, as set forth in Resolution A082 of the 76th General Convention offers a comprehensive design directly related to the Second Mark of Mission to "teach and nurture". The making of disciples is central to the mission of every congregation. Each one of us needs to know our story and the "story" of being an Episcopalian to have it inculcated into our lives if we are to present our congregations as a way to live out the Gospel to others in a believable way.

The Charter for lifelong Christian Formation uplifts the need for continuing education and resources. We are especially mindful that congregations often lack significant resources for Christian Formation and Education. Through the Stevenson School for Ministry we are the Diocese can develop ways to live out the Charter through academic information and formational materials and resources to put our faith into action.

A046

Resolved, the House of Bishops concurring, That the 78th General Convention direct the Executive Council to oversee the establishment of an online resource list and library of materials and programs for licensed lay leadership in small congregations; and be it further

Resolved, That every diocese be interviewed to determine if there are any local internal resources that may be appropriate to be included in the resource list so that each diocese may provide leadership formation for all licensed lay ministries through a variety of methods appropriate to the need of the diocese; and be it further

Resolved, That a report by the Executive Council be made to The Episcopal Church by June 30, 2016 so that access to information may be distributed to the wider Church; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention request the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget, and Finance to consider a budget allocation of \$100,000 for the implementation of this resolution.

A082

Resolved, That the 76th General Convention of The Episcopal Church adopt the following text as The Charter for Lifelong Christian Formation:

Lifelong Christian Faith Formation in The Episcopal Church is lifelong growth in the knowledge, service and love of God as followers of Christ and is informed by Scripture, Tradition and Reason.

"I have called you friends..." -John 15:14-16

Through The Episcopal Church, *God INVITES* all people:

- To enter into a prayerful life of worship, continuous learning, intentional outreach, advocacy and service.
- To hear the Word of God through Scripture, to honor church teachings and continually to embrace the joy of Baptism and Eucharist, spreading the Good News of the risen Christ and ministering to all.
- To respond to the needs of our constantly changing communities, as Jesus calls us, in ways that reflect our diversity and cultures as we seek, wonder and discover together.

- To hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people, placing ourselves in the stories of our faith, thereby empowering us to proclaim the Gospel message.

"... You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit..." -John 15:14-16

Through The Episcopal Church, *God* INSPIRES all people:

- To experience Anglican liturgy, which draws us closer to God, helps us discern God's will and encourages us to share our faith journeys.
- To study Scripture, mindful of the context of our societies and cultures, calling us to seek truth anew while remaining fully present in the community of faith.
- To develop new learning experiences, equipping disciples for life in a world of secular challenges and carefully listening for the words of modern sages who embody the teachings of Christ.
- To prepare for a sustainable future by calling the community to become guardians of God's creation.

"... I am giving you these commands that you may love one another..." -John 15:17

Through The Episcopal Church, *God* TRANSFORMS all people:

- By doing the work Jesus Christ calls us to do, living into the reality that we are all created in the image of God and carrying out God's work of reconciliation, love, forgiveness, healing, justice and peace.
- By striving to be a loving and witnessing community, which faithfully confronts the tensions in the church and the world as we struggle to live God's will.
- By seeking out diverse and expansive ways to empower prophetic action, evangelism, advocacy and collaboration in our contemporary global context.
- By holding all accountable to lift every voice in order to reconcile oppressed and oppressor to the love of God in Jesus Christ our Lord.

And be it further

Resolved, That we affirm that Christian Faith Formation in The Episcopal Church is a lifelong journey with Christ, in Christ and to Christ; and be it further

Resolved, That

1. We urge each diocese to read and study the Charter for Lifelong Christian Formation and to live it out locally.
2. We urge the seminaries and other institutions concerned with formation and education and leadership in The Episcopal Church, to engage the charter as a tool to advance their support for persons in their Christian Formation.
3. We urge The Episcopal Church's Evangelism and Congregational Life Center to commit staff during this triennium to communicate, advocate and implement the charter, and report progress to the Standing Commission on Lifelong Christian Formation and Education before the 77th General Convention.

And be it further

Resolved, That the 76th General Convention request that the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget and Finance consider a budget allocation of \$30,000 for the implementation of this resolution during the 2010-2012 triennium.

Submitted by

The Rev. Canon Kate Harrigan, Chair—The Central Pennsylvania Deputation to the 78th General Convention,