

RESOLUTION (10) Canon I.1.2

NOTE: This is a late resolution (ie it was not filed 45 days prior to the meeting of Synod). As per Ordinance IV.4, a two thirds vote of those present and eligible to vote is required in order to bring this resolution to the floor of the Province III Synod meeting.

Resolution to amend Canon I.1.2

Presented to the Synod of Province III on May 7 – 8, 2018

If adopted, to be forwarded to the Secretary of General Convention.

Resolved, That the Synod of Province III, meeting in Martinsburg, West Virginia on May 7 – 8, 2018, endorses the following resolution and hereby instructs the Provincial Secretary to forward it to the Secretary of General Convention by no later than May 25, 2018.

Restore Standing Commission on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations

Resolved, the House of _____ concurring, That Canon I.1.2(n) be amended by the addition of the following:

(3) A Standing Commission on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations. It shall be the duty of the Commission to:

(i) recommend to the General Convention a comprehensive and coordinated policy and strategy on relations between this Church and other Churches, and this Church and other religions.

(ii) make recommendations to the General Convention concerning inter-church cooperation and unity.

(iii) make recommendations to the General Convention on interreligious dialogue and action.

(iv) submit to the General Convention the proposed text of any formal response to an ecumenical initiative, statement, proposal for full communion, and/or covenant.

Explanation

This resolution was originally adopted by the Executive Council Joint Standing Committee on World Mission on February 7, 2017, and submitted to the Standing Commission on Structure, Governance, Constitution and Canons. It was our understanding that the Standing Commission would give this proposal serious consideration. However, it was their decision not to recommend this to General Convention and neglected to inform the ECJSCWM of their decision. The absence of a positive recommendation was discovered on April 19, 2018.

There are two major issues on the ecumenical and interreligious horizon:

- a) a proposal for full communion with the United Methodist Church, and
- b) a formal response to the 2013 statement issued by the World Council of Churches: *The Church: Towards a Common Vision* (TCTCV), a convergence statement that has been developed over the last thirty years by the WCC's Commission on Faith and Order.

Both issues require, and again I say, *require*, a careful response from the highest authority in the Episcopal Church, i.e. our General Convention. This amendment to our Canons, if adopted, will reestablish this essential Standing Commission, comprised of Episcopalians with knowledge, experience, and expertise in the area of ecumenical and interreligious relations, and qualified to prepare recommendations on these two very significant upcoming issues as well as other matters of importance to the 80th and subsequent General Conventions.

I served on the ECJSCWM for the past four years. After the Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations and Interreligious Affairs was abolished by the 2015 General Convention (on the recommendation of TREC), all ecumenical issues have been referred to the ECJSCWM whose members have had virtually no prior experience with ecumenical issues. I urge your support.

Submitted by:

The Rev. Nathaniel W. Pierce
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Ecumenical Officer for the Diocese of Easton