

**PASSED RESOLUTIONS**  
**133<sup>rd</sup> ANNUAL DIOCESAN CONVENTION**

**(Resolution 1)**

**Title: Urge Legislature to Prohibit Discrimination on Basis of Sexual Orientation  
and Add Sexual Orientation to Hate Crimes Statute**

*Submitted by: Vestry of St. John's Episcopal Church, Charleston*

*The Rev. Susan J. Latimer, Rector*

*The Rev. Ann Lovejoy Johnson, Associate Rector*

RESOLVED, That the Diocese of West Virginia urge members of the West Virginia Senate and House of Delegates to pass legislation which would amend the current state human rights law, W.Va. Code 5-11-1 et seq. to prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, and to add sexual orientation to the motivations justifying prosecution under the West Virginia Hate Crimes statute, W.Va. Code § 61-6-21.

RESOLVED, That the Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of West Virginia communicate such to each member of the West Virginia Senate and House of Delegates during the week prior to the start of every legislative session until the West Virginia Senate and House of Delegates pass legislation which amends the current state human rights law, W.Va. Code 5-11-1 et seq. to prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, and adds sexual orientation to the motivations justifying prosecution under the West Virginia Hate Crimes statute, W.Va. Code § 61-6-21.

EXPLANATION: As a people of Christ, we believe that all people within the boundaries of the state of West Virginia have the right to be free from any violence, or intimidation by threat of violence committed against their persons or property because of their race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, political affiliation or sexual orientation. Given this, we believe that it is essential that our bishop express our position by sending an annual reminder to our state legislators, regardless of how many legislators annually respond to this reminder, on these issues until the current human rights law and hate crimes statute are amended to both prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and add sexual orientation to the motivations justifying prosecution under the West Virginia Hate Crimes statute.

**(Resolution 2)**

**Blessing Same-Gender Relationships**

*Submitted by: Vestry of St. John's Episcopal Church, Charleston*

*The Rev. Ann Lovejoy Johnson, Associate Rector*

RESOLVED, That this convention urges our Bishop to honor same-gender relationships by supporting public rites for the blessing of same-gender relationships in congregations where such blessings are supported and so desired and establishing a 6-month task force to craft procedures and requirements to support such blessings.

EXPLANATION: We acknowledge the question of public rites for the blessing of those in same-gender, committed relationships has been a point of controversy causing great divisions within the Anglican Communion, particularly following the recognition by the 2003 General Convention of the Episcopal Church (TEC) that same-gender blessings are within the common life of the Church and that it is within a bishop's discretion to allow blessing as a pastoral response (C051).

More recently, at the 2009 General Convention of TEC, resolution C056 passed, allowing bishops to provide a generous pastoral response to meet the needs of members of this Church, including those within civil jurisdictions where same-gender marriage, civil unions, or domestic partnerships are legal.

Even more recently, The Rt. Rev. Thomas E. Breidenthal, Bishop of the Diocese of Southern Ohio, has begun authorizing same-gender blessing as of Easter, 2010. Bishop Briedenthal announced the establishment of a task force in November, 2009 of clergy and laity who worked with him to craft procedures and requirements to make the blessing of same-gender couples a reality in that diocese in 6 short months.

We recognize that it is The Rt. Rev. Michie Klusmeyer's decision to allow the blessing of same-gender relationships.

We recognize that not all congregations in the Episcopal Diocese of West Virginia support the blessing of same-gender relationships.

We pray that our Bishop and representatives to this convention will recognize and honor the desire of those congregations and priests who wish to honor same-gender relationships through sanctioned same-gender blessings.

We pray that a 6-month task force will be established to craft the procedures, requirements and rites to make same-gender blessings a reality in those congregations where such blessings are desired.

We pray that, as people of Christ and members of the body where the claim, "all are welcome" is a rallying cry, we may see our way clear to allow the blessing of same-gender relationships in congregations where it is so desired.

#### **(Resolution 4)**

##### **Encourage Use of Diocesan Stewardship Resources**

*Submitted by the Commission on Stewardship, Linda Crocker, chairperson*

Resolved, that the 2010 Diocesan Convention commends to the congregations of our diocese the resources provided by the Stewardship Commission. These include the website [www.wvstewardship.com](http://www.wvstewardship.com), the three stewardship study series, the opportunity for congregation-based consultations, and the Hidden Treasure conference and training event April 8-9, 2011 .

#### Explanation

The Stewardship Commission exists to encourage and enable the leadership of every congregation in the Diocese of West Virginia to embrace a holistic approach in stewardship that supports their members in their individual and corporate stewardship of God's gifts. The Stewardship Commission further exists to help congregations identify, develop and implement effective resources and procedures, which reflect the teaching and principles of the Episcopal Church. To these ends the Stewardship Commission offers its services.