

DIOCESE OF PENNSYLVANIA

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235th CONVENTION
NOVEMBER 10, 2018

Deadline for submitting resolutions is September 10, 2018

Designated contact person for this resolution:

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TITLE Affirming Pilgrimage

RESOLVED: That the 235th Convention of the Diocese of Pennsylvania reaffirm its commitment as established at this convention in 2015 to support our sisters and brothers in the Holy Land through prayer, pilgrimage, and financial assistance, recognizing especially the work of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem in bearing tenacious witness to the love of Christ through its hospitals, schools, and centers for children with disabilities.

RESOLVED: That this Convention recognize the Bishop's Epiphany 2019 pilgrimage to the Holy Land as a concrete affirmation of the 2015 resolution and commend him and his fellow pilgrims to share in the witness-bearing our sisters and brothers in the Diocese of Jerusalem do each day through their 28 ministries to feed the hungry, heal the sick, empower the disabled, and educate the next generation through quality schools and vocational programs, regardless of their religion, ethnic origin, or ability to pay.

RESOLVED: That this Convention commit to praying for the Bishop and his fellow pilgrims during their travels (January 26 – February 7, 2019), that they may encounter the Gospels in stone and flesh, visiting the sights that mark the story of our faith and the Christians who keep that faith alive in the Holy Land, and return to this Diocese renewed, inspired, and eager to share their illuminated understanding of Jesus and his restorative love.

RESOLVED: That this Diocese, its parishes, and members commit to the spiritual practice of pilgrimage in whatever manner we are able, be it in the Holy Land, through mission trips far and wide, and in our own communities, so that our biases might be broken open by the transformative presence of Christ who reveals himself in the faces of those whom we encounter on the pilgrim's way, especially the poor, the marginalized, and those who crave justice and reconciliation.

EXPLANATION: After Jesus's resurrection from the dead, Luke says he appeared to his disciples and said, "Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things." (Luke 24: 46-48)

Christians around the world have borne witness to "those things" ever since, and yet, as Jesus says, the movement begins in Jerusalem. The movement we inherit in Pennsylvania has its roots in the land Christ called home, both rugged and beautiful, and our sisters and brothers in the movement continue to bear witness through hospitals and schools that serve the most marginalized in the name of Jesus. Their numbers continue to diminish, however; Christians in the Holy Land now comprise less than one percent of the total population. Of those remaining Christians, about 7,000 are Palestinian Episcopalians; like us, they share in the fellowship of the Anglican Communion.

These Palestinian Episcopalians—along with their brothers and sisters throughout the Diocese of Jerusalem in Jordan, Israel, Syria and Lebanon—are "living stones," embodying the spirit of Christ as agents of reconciliation and restorative justice. Pilgrimage to the Holy Land that honors their witness enables us in the Diocese of Pennsylvania to share in that same ministry and echo here Christ's call to justice and love.

This resolution acknowledges that the Rt. Rev. Daniel Gutiérrez is leading a pilgrimage to the Holy Land in Epiphany 2019, and it seeks to recognize this pilgrimage as a concrete step toward the commitments this Diocese made in 2015 at its 232nd Convention through Resolution 8, which encouraged members of this Diocese to make pilgrimage to the Holy Land and to honor the witness and ministry of the Diocese of Jerusalem.

Supporting this resolution are: The Rev. Barbara Abbott, Mary Allen, Anne Atlee, The Rt. Rev. Allen Bartlett, Jerrie Bartlett, The Rev. E. Clifford Cutler, Phoebe Griswold, Dana Hall, The Rev. Koshy Matthews, and Joan Menocal.

Submitted by: The Rev. Matthew Dayton-Welch and The Rev. Judith Beck