

General Convention, 2018



The 79th General Convention of the Episcopal Church will be held in Austin, Texas from July 5-13, 2018.

Rev. Terri and Pru Randall from our parish will attend as deputies as part of the Diocese of Montana's deputation.

The General Convention is the primary governing and legislative body of the Episcopal Church in the United States of

America and written into the original constitution in 1789. It has grown to be the largest bicameral legislative body.

With the exception of the Bible, the Book of Common Prayer, and the Constitution and Canons, it is the ultimate authority in the Episcopal Church. General Convention comprises two houses: the House of Deputies and the House of Bishops. It meets regularly once every three years; however, the House of Bishops meets regularly in between sessions of General Convention. The Bishops have the right to call special meetings of General Convention.

The Most Reverend Michael Curry, our presiding bishop, leads the House of Bishops, and the Rev. Gay Clark Jennings is the elected leader of the House of Deputies.

All diocesan, coadjutor, suffragan, and assistant bishops of the Episcopal Church, whether active or retired, have seat and vote in the House of Bishops. Each diocese of the Episcopal Church, as well as the Navajoland Area Mission and the Convocation of Episcopal Churches in Europe, are entitled to representation in the House of Deputies by four clergy deputies, either presbyters or deacons, canonically resident in the diocese and four lay deputies who are confirmed communicants in good standing. Resolutions must pass both houses in order to take effect.

The convention is divided into committees which consider resolutions. Resolutions arise from four different sources:

- 1) "A" resolutions from interim bodies whose work is collected in what is referred to as the "Blue Book"
- 2) "B" resolutions which come from Bishops
- 3) "C" resolutions which come from diocesan conventions and
- 4) "D" resolutions which originate from Deputies.

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Each properly submitted resolution is referred to a convention committee which makes its recommendation to the House. When one house has acted on the resolution it is sent to the other house for consideration.

How do people, like you or me, become deputies?

After every General Convention, the triennial meeting cycle begins anew.

– Parishioners—that’s you and me—select people to be delegates (people who represent the parish in their deliberations) to their annual conventions.

– The delegates elect their diocese’s General Convention deputies (people who vote based on their knowledge and consciences): four clergy and four lay people in addition to four alternates in each order.

– Deputies work on preparatory responsibilities and then go to General Convention.

What do deputies do?

Deputies have the responsibility of attending its provinces’ meetings, called synods, which meet before General Conventions. Deputies attend the House of Deputies plenary sessions where they listen to addresses and debates, and vote. About one third of the deputies work on committees. They network and attend dinners, such as seminary ones and their diocese’s. They caucus frequently within their deputation. During the legislative days’ business break times, they can visit with one another and peruse the exhibits. There are a lot of them, and they fall into two categories: ministry and marketing.

Summary Schedule

July 3: Registration and committee meetings will begin

July 4: Addresses by Presiding Bishop Michael Curry and the Rev. Gay Clark Jenkins, president of the House of Deputies.

July 5: The first legislative day

July 13: The ninth and final legislative day

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