

# GC81 General Convention Deputation

## Report to the 185<sup>th</sup> Convention of the Diocese of Missouri

The 81<sup>st</sup> General Convention of The Episcopal Church (TEC) met in Louisville, KY on June 23-28, 2024. The General Convention (GC) meets every three years as a bicameral legislature that includes the [House of Deputies](#) and the [House of Bishops](#), although due to the Covid-19 pandemic and one-year delay of the 80<sup>th</sup> GC, only two years had passed since the previous GC. We are now back on the triennial meeting schedule. And it was glorious to once again welcome visitors, special guests, the Episcopal Church Women's triennial meeting and a large exhibit area as part of the event after the austerity of GC80 in Baltimore two years ago.

**The House of Deputies (HoD)** of the General Convention consists of up to four lay Deputies and four clergy Deputies elected by their respective Dioceses. Alternate Deputies may attend, observe, and substitute for Deputies in their order if necessary. There were 111 dioceses total in TEC at the time of GC81.

Your Deputies to GC81 in Louisville, KY were:

### Laity

- L1 Betty Bowersox, *Grace, Kirkwood* (co-chair)
- L2 Doris Lucy-Goodlow, *Christ Church Cathedral, STL*
- L3 Michael Booker, *St. Francis, Eureka*
- L4 Adrienne Dillon, *All Saints and Ascension, Northwoods*

### Clergy

- C1 Kathie Adams-Shepherd *Christ Church Cathedral, STL* (co-chair)
- C2 Shug Goodlow, *St. Martin's, Ellisville & Christ Church, Rolla*
- C3 Tamsen Whistler, *Trinity, St. Charles*
- C4 Joshua Huber, *Calvary, Columbia*

The Alternate Deputies\* were:

- L5 Patricia O'Brien, *Grace, Kirkwood*
- C5 Leslie Scoopmire, *St. Martin's, Ellisville*
- C6 Doris Westfall, *Canon to the Ordinary*

\* Alternate slots L6, L7, L8, C7, and C8 were empty. Canon Doris was appointed to fill slot C6.

The following were elected as Deputies in 2022 but resigned prior to GC81:

- L4: Liz Yount, *St. Peter's, Ladue*
- L5: Tyler Helm, *Christ Church, Cape Girardeau*
- C6: Mary Korte, *Christ Church, Rolla & Trinity, STL*

### Voting numbers

- 415 Clerical Deputies from 109 dioceses generally voted.
- 414 Lay Deputies from 106 dioceses generally voted.
- 239 Alternate Deputies were registered for GC81

There was also a very strong Official Youth Presence. These were teens that applied and were selected to represent their respective provinces at GC81. This group of about 18 youths had seat and voice in the HoD.

**The House of Bishops (HoB)** consists of all Bishops in TEC. There were 175 Bishops registered for GC81, including Bishop Deon Johnson of the Diocese of Missouri.

### Diocese of Missouri Deputation

Your GC81 Deputation began preparing for GC81 in August/September of 2023 with a Zoom meeting and a lot of ‘what you should know’ reading to do. However, most of the preparation revolved around reading the multitude of reports and resolutions generated by [Interim Bodies](#) (various commissions, committees, task forces, agencies and boards) which meet between the triennial sessions to accomplish ongoing work and tasks set in the triennial sessions. The majority of reports were issued into the “Blue Book” by mid-March of 2024, thus that is when the Deputation began to meet in earnest. Meetings were via Zoom except one in-person meeting held at Trinity, St. Charles in May, which Bishop Deon also attended. Between March and June of 2024 there were 8 preparation meetings, each spanning 1.5 to 2 hours totaling 14+ hours of contact time, plus multiple hours of preparation time, for each Deputy. We also tracked new resolutions submitted by individuals and groups, provinces and dioceses, etc. Of the approximately 64 Blue Book Reports the DioMO Deputies decided to review and summarize, 54 (~84%) were completed and reported on by ten deputies during our preparation meetings. During the Convention, the Deputies were consumed by Legislative Committees and other Committee/Special Interest meetings, worship, special events, catching up with friends and committee members we usually only saw on-line, morning, afternoon and evening Legislative Sessions, plus after-Session DioMO review gatherings that kept us busy from 7:00AM until after 10:00PM each day. Yet even with all the busyness, there was joy, camaraderie, and satisfaction in the things that we did and accomplished.

### Resolutions

As the church’s primary governing body, General Convention splits its authority between the House of Bishops and House of Deputies. The two houses handled **396 resolutions**, many passing via daily, sometimes massive, [consent calendars](#).

314 Resolutions Passed, with statuses:

- Concurred [193]
- Adopted by HoB [47]
- Adopted by HoD [59]
- Concurred with Referral to an Interim Body [15]

82 Resolutions did NOT pass, with statuses:

- Rejected [14]
- Take No Further Action [61]
- Not Concurred [5]
- No Action [2]

Resolutions, when adopted and concurred by both the HoD and the HoB, become the official Acts of General Convention.

### GC81 Highlights

- *The Rt. Rev. Sean Rowe*, Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Northwestern PA and Bishop Provisional, Diocese of Western NY was elected from a slate of five nominees on the first ballot as the 28th Presiding Bishop of TEC. Bishop Rowe’s 9-year term as the public face & voice of The Episcopal Church and its chief pastor begins on November 1<sup>st</sup>.
- *Ms. Julia Ayala Harris*, Diocese of Oklahoma, was elected for a 2<sup>nd</sup> term as President of the HoD.
- *The Rev. Steve Pankey*, Diocese of Kentucky, was elected as Vice President of the HoD
- A *\$143 million budget* was proposed and passed for 2025-2027. The plan will fund 140 full-time equivalent staff positions, grant programs, churchwide governance, operational functions, and initiatives focused on some of the church’s top ministry priorities, including racial healing, evangelism and creation care.

- *Retiring Presiding Bishop Michael Curry* preached at an evening Kickoff Revival at the Yum! Center before the start of the Convention.
- Five joint (bishops, deputies, guests) worship services held (with Deputy Adrienne Dillon in the choir.)
- *Many resolutions regarding Prayer Book additions*, trial-use liturgies, new feast days and other liturgical updates were considered.
  - Resolution A072 passed its 2<sup>nd</sup> reading, which will define the Book of Common Prayer as “Those liturgical forms and other texts authorized by the General Convention per this article and the Canons of the Church.”
- *Diocesan Mergers - four total:*
  - *Juncture:* The Agreement of the Union between the Diocese of Eastern Michigan and Western Michigan was ratified. The new name will be the Episcopal Diocese of the Great Lakes.
  - *Reunion:* The three Dioceses of Eau Claire, Fond du Lac and Milwaukee in Wisconsin reunited as the Diocese of Wisconsin.
  - *Missionary Diocese:* The resolution passed for *The Episcopal Church in Navajoland*, an area mission, to be elevated to the status of missionary diocese. This allows them to elect their own bishop, vs having one appointed for them.
  - *Merger:* The resolution passed to merge Micronesia, another area mission, with the Diocese of Hawai'i.
- *At least 16 resolutions related to the Israel-Palestine Conflict* were proposed for bishops' and deputies' consideration. Two demonstrations and a Compline for Palestine prayer service were also held. A substitute version of Resolution D013 that was hammered out by a conference committee after fierce debate in both houses, emerged as a compromise that addresses more broadly the decades-old conflict and recent violence.
- *A rally led by Bishops United Against Gun Violence* was held in a Louisville park, with “Youth Working to End Gun Violence” members also speaking at the demonstration.
- *The Episcopal Coalition for Racial Equity and Healing*, established via Resolution 2022-A125, held an informational meeting on June 23. During the Convention they reported that their Incorporation papers were signed April 17, 2024, a Board of Directors had been formed, and that they expect to hire staff in the next few months. This is a voluntary association of Episcopal dioceses, parishes, organizations, and individuals dedicated to the work of becoming the beloved community. The Coalition welcomes participation from all groups and individuals at every level of the church who faithfully engage in the work of truth-telling, reckoning, and healing for racial equity, justice, and the dismantling of white supremacy.
- At their General Conference in April, *The United Methodist Church* voted [in favor of a full communion agreement with The Episcopal Church](#). TEC's latest draft of Resolution A049 didn't go quite that far, but it did celebrate the Methodists' recent votes affirming LGBTQ+ people, while setting out needed action [before The Episcopal Church would vote on full communion](#). This will be discussed and considered in committee over the next 3 years and may be brought for a vote at GC82 in 2027.

### What's Next?!

Phoenix Arizona has been selected as the host city of the 82<sup>nd</sup> General Convention of the Episcopal Church. It will be held sometime in July 2027, and the Diocese of Arizona is already seeking volunteers.

The Diocese of MO will elect the GC82 Lay and Clergy Deputies and Alternates at our 186<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention in November of 2025. If there are any questions, concerns, or suggestions regarding General Convention or what the responsibilities are for Deputies, please feel free to contact any of the GC81 DioMO Deputies.

Respectfully submitted,

Ms. Betty Bowersox and the Very Rev. Kathie Adams-Shepherd  
Diocese of Missouri's GC81 Deputation Co-Chairs