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FINAL REPORT  
OF THE COMMITTEE ON RESOLUTIONS  
TO THE 241ST DIOCESAN CONVENTION

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The Committee on Resolutions received two proposed resolutions by the September 30, 2024 deadline for submissions. The proposals are reported below, having been edited as to form. Hearings were held on Saturday, November 2, 2024, in person and by Zoom conference, at which proposers had an opportunity to amend their original proposals, and following which the Committee met and decided on recommendations. This Final Report thus supersedes the Preliminary Report.

As provided by the Rules of Order, proposed resolutions not timely submitted to the Committee on Resolutions, and not required by canon to be submitted to some other committee, may be brought to the floor of Convention for consideration only upon a two-thirds vote of Convention.

*Respectfully submitted,*

Meg Holland, Esq., Chair  
The Rev'd Susanna Cates  
The Rev'd Dr. John P. Mitchell  
The Rev'd Angelo Wildgoose  
Canon Paul Ambos, Esq., Secretary  
Ms. Mirelle White, Diocesan Liaison

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RESOLUTION 241-1:

*Subject: Sales of Real Estate of Continuing Mission Congregations*

*Be it resolved,* That the 241st Annual Convention of the Diocese of New Jersey, pursuant to Canon 13, Section 9, gives the following direction to The Trustees of Church Property of the Diocese of New Jersey concerning the proceeds of sale or other disposition of real estate for the benefit of a continuing Mission congregation:

- (a) If such real estate is subject to an express trust, then the Trustees shall disburse such proceeds in accordance with the terms of such trust.
- (b) If the congregation has submitted a plan for such proceeds in its application for consent under New Jersey Revised Statutes § 16:12-4 that has been approved by the Bishop and Standing Committee of the Diocese, then the Trustees shall disburse such proceeds in accordance with such plan.
- (c) If the congregation has not submitted such a plan, then the Trustees in their discretion shall disburse such proceeds in a way that, in the Trustees' judgment, best supports such

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congregation in its efforts to discharge the common call and mission set forth in Canon 47 of the Diocese.

*SUBMITTED BY: Canon Paul Wolfgang*

*Statement in Support of Resolution 241-1 by Proposer:*

The Trustees of Church Property under Canon 13.9 can hold title to the real property of mission congregations in trust for each such congregation. The Canon provides that "The disbursement of income and the disposition of property held in trust by the Trustees of Church Property shall be subject to the conditions of the trust or, if not so specified, as directed by canon or as directed by resolution of the Convention." So where the realty was given to the original congregation subject to a trust by a donor is sold, the Trustees are required to honor the terms of that trust.

The Real Estate Memorandum asks congregations wishing to sell property to identify what it will do with the proceeds of sale. If this is done, and the Bishop and Standing Committee approve the plan, the Trustees should honor that intention as well.

Frequently in the past several years properties have been sold with the Trustees taking back a mortgage, where outside financing has not been available. In such cases, the Trustees will normally pass through the monthly mortgage payments to the congregation with out any formal agreement.

If none of the above apply, this Resolution would permit the Trustees to use their discretion to apportion payments of proceeds in the absence of a prior designation and in accordance with the provisions of Canon 47 of the Diocese, which provides:

SECTION 1. (a) The people and Congregations of the Diocese share a common call and mission to proclaim and live out the Gospel. The shape and appearance of that call and mission will vary from Congregation to Congregation over time and depending on resources and the needs of the people and communities which they serve. That call and mission will always be defined and prompted by the Gospel.

(b) The people of the Diocese acting in Convention may from time to time adopt statements setting forth common expectations for congregational behavior and work in support of the shared call and mission of all Congregations. A statement adopted by Convention and specifically describing itself as a standard under this Canon 47 is referred to in these canons as "Common Expectations for Mission" and if so adopted will be printed as an addendum to this Canon.

(c) It is the mutual responsibility of the Diocese, including its Bishop, staff, the various boards, committees, and commissions established from time to time, the Convocations, and the several Congregations of the Diocese, to support each Congregation in its efforts to discharge the common call and mission described in this Canon 47 or as described in Common Expectations for Mission.

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**Recommendation by Committee on Resolutions:**

**The Committee recommends the adoption of this proposal. It will appear on the Consent Calendar for adoption unless removed.**

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## RESOLUTION 241-2:

*Subject: Unemployment Compensation and Disability Insurance Opt-in*

*Be it resolved,* That the 241st Convention of the Diocese of New Jersey recognize our moral responsibility for the proper care and stewardship of all whom we employ; and be it

*Further resolved,* That all Congregations of the Diocese of New Jersey be urged to opt in to become subject to the New Jersey Unemployment Compensation and Temporary Disability Benefits Law, so that all their employees (lay and clergy) may become eligible for unemployment and disability benefits.

*SUBMITTED BY: The Rev. Angela Cipolla*

*Statement in Support of Resolution 241-2 by Proposer:*

Unemployment compensation taxes are one of the many taxes that churches are exempt from, therefore our employees are not typically eligible for unemployment benefits. At a time when many congregations are having to make difficult decisions about finances, it is likely that some congregations may have to lay off or reduce the hours of their employees.

While we are not obligated by state or federal law to pay this tax, we must always remember Jesus' command to love our neighbor as ourselves. To demonstrate that love of neighbor, we must take seriously the needs of those whom we can no longer employ. We must also ensure the care of those who are temporarily unable to work due to illness or injury. Opting into N.J. State Unemployment and Temporary Disability Insurance allows our employees this safety net with only a minimal impact on our budgets (for those who opt-in during 2025, the initial employer contributions are: 3% of wages for unemployment insurance and 0.5% for temporary disability insurance). It should be noted that disability insurance is not needed for clergy who have this benefit through the Clergy Pension Plan and also that both short-term and long-term disability insurance for lay employees who work at least half time is available through the Church Pension Group.

**Recommendation by Committee on Resolutions:**

**The Committee recommends the adoption of this proposal. It will appear on the Consent Calendar for adoption unless removed.**