



**Episcopal Diocese of Chicago**

178<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention

November 20-21, 2015

**LEGISLATION AND RESOLUTIONS**

**Legislation**

- A-178 – Amend Constitution Article I [The Title and Bounds of the Diocese]  
(1<sup>st</sup> Reading) —PASSED
- B-178 – Amend Constitution Article V [Members of the Convention]  
(1<sup>st</sup> Reading) —PASSED
- C-178 – Amend Constitution Article VII [The Secretary of the Convention]  
(1<sup>st</sup> Reading) —PASSED
- D-178 – Amend Constitution Article XIII, Section 1 [The Transaction of Business]  
(1<sup>st</sup> Reading) —PASSED
- E-178 – Amend Constitution Article XIII, Section 2 [The Transaction of Business]  
(1<sup>st</sup> Reading) —PASSED
- F-178 – Amend Canons 37 and 37A [The Registrar and Historiographer of the Diocese]  
—PASSED

**Resolutions**

- G-178 – Clergy Minimum Cash Compensation —PASSED
- H-178 – Mandating State Licensing of Gun Dealers —PASSED
- I-178 – On Being Socially Responsible Investors in Israel and Palestine —NOT PASSED
- J-178 – Welcoming of Syrian and other international refugees —PASSED

# A-178

**The 178<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention  
Diocese of Chicago  
November 20-21, 2015**

**Subject: Amend Constitution Article I [The Title and Bounds of the Diocese]  
(1st Reading)—PASSED**

**Sponsor: The Very Reverend M.E. Eccles, The Reverend Matthew Humm and the  
Reverend Emily Mellott**

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## **RESOLUTION**

***Resolved***, that Article 1 of the Constitution of the Diocese of Chicago be amended to read as follows:

This Diocese shall be known and distinguished as the “Diocese of Chicago,” and its bounds shall be all that portion of the State of Illinois lying ~~north of the counties of Rock Island, Henry and Bureau, east of the Illinois River, and north of the counties of, McLean, Ford, Champaign, and Vermillion.~~ within the counties of Jo Daviess, Stephenson, Winnebago, Boone, Lake, Carroll, Ogle, De Kalb, McHenry, Kane, DuPage, Cook, Whiteside, Lee, Kendall, Will, Rock Island, Mercer, Henry, Bureau, La Salle, Grundy, Kankakee, Henderson, Warren, Knox, Stark, Putman, Marshall, Livingston, Iroquois, Hancock, McDonough, Fulton, Peoria, Adams, Schuyler, Brown, Pike, Woodford, and Calhoun.

## **EXPLANATION**

This resolution updates the boundaries of the Diocese of Chicago to reflect the action of the 175th Convention of the Diocese on June 8, 2013 which approved reunification with the former Diocese of Quincy. The new boundaries incorporate all of the geographic areas of the former Diocese of Quincy.

Adoption of this resolution is not expected to require expenditures that would have an impact on the Diocesan budget.

This resolution has been endorsed by: Standing Committee, Diocesan Council, and Bishop and Trustees.

B-178

The 178<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention  
Diocese of Chicago  
November 20-21, 2015

**Subject:** Amend Constitution Article V [Members of the Convention]  
(1st Reading)—PASSED

**Sponsor:** The Very Reverend M.E. Eccles, The Reverend Matthew Humm and the  
Reverend Emily Mellott

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**RESOLUTION**

*Resolved*, that Article 5, Sections 3, 4 and 6 of the Constitution of the Diocese of Chicago be amended to read as follows:

**Sec. 3.** The Lay Members shall consist of a Delegate or Delegates, not exceeding three, from the Cathedral congregation and from each Parish in union with the Convention, and from each Mission in the Diocese. All Lay Delegates shall be communicants and the Lay Delegates from each Parish or Mission shall be chosen by the Vestry or Bishop's Committee or at a Parish Meeting of the congregation from among the communicants of the Parish congregation entitled to vote according to the provisions of Canon 22 Sec. 3 for Wardens and Vestry at an Annual Parish Meeting.

**Sec. 4.** ~~Each organized Mission in the Diocese, recognized by the Ecclesiastical Authority shall be entitled to representation in the Convention by two communicants of the Mission who shall be nominated by the Priest in Charge, if there be one, and the Bishop's Committee, for appointment by the Ecclesiastical Authority. The Representatives of Missions shall have all the rights of Representatives of Parishes.~~ In addition to Lay members representing Parishes and Missions of the Diocese, there may be Representatives of Campus Ministries located in this Diocese and Youth Representatives as provided in the Canons of the Diocese of Chicago.

**Sec. 6.** It is the duty of every member of the Clergy entitled to a seat to attend the meetings of the Convention, and of every Parish in union with the Convention, and of every Mission in the Diocese to send one or more delegates.

## EXPLANATION

This amendment of Article 5 will equalize representation between mission and parish congregations of the Diocese of Chicago, giving every congregation the opportunity for equal voice and vote in Convention.

In working with Mission congregations of the Diocese, the Congregations Commission and Bishop & Trustees have discerned that the limitation of lay representation by mission congregations serves no constructive purpose and deprives both the Diocese and mission congregations of appropriate voice in the councils of this Diocese.

This change recognizes that mission congregations are of equal value to the mission and vitality of this diocese as Parish congregations, and that lay members of these congregations should be given voice, vote, and responsibility for the governance of this Diocese on an equal footing.

As most mission congregations in this diocese function much like parishes in self-governance, this resolution also provides that Lay Delegates to Convention may be chosen by the eligible voters or elected leaders of the congregation or the mission, rather than appointed by the Ecclesiastical Authority, bringing our Constitution up to date with the way our practice of ministry has evolved.

This amendment of Article 5 will require corresponding changes in Canon 2 “The Lay Delegates” which should be considered by the 179th Convention of this Diocese along with the second reading of this amendment to the Constitution.

Adoption of this resolution is not expected to require expenditures that would have an impact on the Diocesan budget.

This resolution has been endorsed by: Congregations Commission, Diocesan Council, and Bishop and Trustees.

C-178

**The 178<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention  
Diocese of Chicago  
November 20-21, 2015**

**Subject: Amend Constitution Article VII [The Secretary of the Convention]  
(1st Reading)—PASSED**

**Sponsor: The Reverend Emily Mellott, The Very Reverend M.E. Eccles, The Reverend  
Matthew Humm**

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**RESOLUTION**

*Resolved*, that Article 7 of the Constitution of the Diocese of Chicago, be amended to read as follows:

At each Annual Convention a Secretary shall be elected from among the members thereof, who shall continue in office until a successor is appointed. The Secretary of Convention shall be a communicant in good standing in a mission or parish in the diocese, or a member of the clergy in good standing. When not a delegate in a Meeting of Convention, the Secretary of Convention shall be entitled, ex officio, to all the rights and privileges of membership to seat and voice in Convention. The Secretary's duty shall be to take minutes of the proceedings, and when approved, to enter them in a proper record; to preserve the journals and records; to attest the public acts of the body; and faithfully to deliver to his or her successor all books, ~~and~~ papers, and electronic records which may be in his or her possession relating to the affairs of the Convention. The Secretary shall also give due notice to each member of the Clergy, Parish and Mission, of the time and place appointed for the meeting of the succeeding Convention. One or more Assistant Secretaries may be appointed by the Secretary, with the approval of the Convention, who may be designated by the Secretary to share in any of the duties of the Secretary.

Whenever there shall be a vacancy in the office of the Secretary of the Convention occurring during the progress of the Convention, the duties of the Secretary of the Convention shall devolve upon the Assistant Secretary, if there be one, or if more than one, then such one of the Assistant Secretaries as shall be designated by the President of the Convention. If the vacancy shall occur after the adjournment of the Convention, any person deemed qualified may be appointed by the Ecclesiastical Authority to carry on the post-Convention duties of the Secretary of the Convention, including the preparation or completion of the

Journal of the Convention. The Bishop may at his discretion appoint a Secretary to serve during the Convention, who shall be designated the Bishop's Secretary.

# D-178

**The 178<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention  
Diocese of Chicago  
November 20-21, 2015**

**Subject: Amend Constitution Article XIII, Section 1 [The Transaction of Business] (1st Reading)—PASSED**

**Sponsor: The Very Reverend M. E. Eccles, the Reverend Matthew Humm, and the Reverend Emily Mellott**

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## **RESOLUTION**

***Resolved***, that that Article 13, Section 1 of the Constitution of the Diocese of Chicago be amended to read as follows:

Seventy-five ~~Fifty~~ of the Clergy entitled to seats in the Convention, and Lay delegates from ~~thirty~~ one-third of the Parishes and Missions entitled to representation, at any time duly assembled, shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business, except that a lesser number may adjourn from time to time. ~~The presence of delegates from Organized Missions shall in no case be required for the validity of the proceedings of any Convention.~~

## **EXPLANATION**

This amendment fully includes mission congregations as counting toward the constitution of the quorum at Convention. Additionally, it raises the number of clergy required to establish a quorum to a number that is more appropriate to the size of our convention.

Adoption of this resolution is not expected to require expenditures that would have an impact on the Diocesan budget.

This resolution has been endorsed by: Congregations Commission, Diocesan Council, and Bishop and Trustees.

E-178

**The 178<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention  
Diocese of Chicago  
November 20-21, 2015**

**Subject: Amend Constitution Article XIII, Section 2 [The Transaction of Business]  
(1st Reading)—PASSED**

**Sponsor: The Very Reverend M.E. Eccles, The Reverend Matthew Humm and  
The Reverend Emily Mellott**

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**RESOLUTION**

***Resolved***, that Article 13, Section 2 of the Constitution of the Diocese of Chicago be amended to read as follows:

Sec. 2. In all matters which shall come before the Convention, the Bishop and other Clergy and the Laity shall deliberate as one body. In voting the Clergy and Laity shall vote as individuals. A majority of votes of the two Orders jointly shall be decisive, except as otherwise provided in this Constitution. On the call of any five members of the Clergy or delegations entitled to vote, the two Orders shall vote separately, and their concurrence shall be necessary to constitute a decision. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the procedures for nomination and election of persons to office at Convention shall be conducted in the manner provided in Canon 53 and (in the case of the election of a Bishop) Article 16 of this Constitution.

**EXPLANATION**

In 2010, at the 173<sup>rd</sup> Annual Convention of the Diocese, Convention approved an amendment to Canon 53 to simplify the voting procedures for elections at Convention. The prior provisions were bulky and unworkable, particularly when we had elections for multi-seat offices (such as deputies to General Convention). This amendment would bring our Constitution into line with the current wording of Canon 53, which now provides for a plurality election after the first ballot (thus requiring an exemption from the requirement of a “majority of votes” in the third sentence of Section 2).

This change only affects elections at Convention. On all other matters coming before Convention, a vote by orders may be invoked as noted in the existing language of Section 2, and a majority vote (rather than a plurality) is still required. (Note that on most matters other than

elections, the distinction between plurality and majority is moot, since the choice is binary – for or against.)

Adoption of this resolution is not expected to require expenditures that would have an impact on the Diocesan budget.

**F-178**

**The 178<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention  
Diocese of Chicago  
November 20-21, 2015**

**Subject: Amend Canons 37 and 37A [The Registrar and Historiographer of the Diocese]—PASSED**

**Sponsor: The Very Reverend M.E. Eccles, The Reverend Matthew Humm and The Reverend Emily Mellott**

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**RESOLUTION**

*Resolved*, that Canon 37A be deleted, and that Canon 37 be amended and restated in its entirety to read as follows:

**CANON 37  
The Historiographer of the Diocese**

It shall be the duty of the Historiographer of the Diocese to have custody of all journals, pamphlets, reports, papers, and other documents belonging to the Diocese, and to secure, keep or record, as far as practicable, documents and important facts pertaining to the history of the Diocese, and its institutions, Parishes and Missions. The Historiographer shall put the same in order; provide for their safe keeping and facility of reference; complete them when defective; and in like manner to collect and preserve what may hereafter come into the Historiographer's possession. All books, papers and documents in charge of the Historiographer shall be open to the inspection of the Ecclesiastical Authority, the Standing Committee, and the Convention of the Diocese on order from that body. The Historiographer shall have the right under order from the Ecclesiastical Authority to issue a proper certificate of any fact of record within his or her charge.

**EXPLANATION**

In 2014, the 177<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention of the Diocese approved (on the second reading) amendments to Articles 9 and 9A of the Constitution, effectively consolidating the offices of Historiographer and Registrar, to reflect the current reality. This resolution would revise the corresponding canons to make a similar consolidation.

Adoption of this resolution is not expected to require expenditures that would have an impact on the Diocesan budget

G-178

The 178<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention  
Diocese of Chicago  
November 20-21, 2015

**Subject: Clergy Minimum Cash Compensation—PASSED**

**Sponsor: Keith Kampert, Treasurer of the Diocese and Diocesan Council**

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**RESOLUTIONS**

*Resolved*, that that the required minimum cash compensation to be paid to full-time clergy in the Diocese for the calendar year of 2016 shall be:

- (a) \$61,200 if no church housing and utilities are provided by the Church; or
- (b) \$44,500 if housing and utilities are provided by the Church.

*Further resolved*, that the Diocesan Treasurer and the Diocesan Council are directed to recommend to each annual Diocesan Convention the adoption of an inflationary adjustment to the required minimum cash compensation for full-time clergy working in congregations and on the Bishop's staff; and

*Further resolved*, that such recommendation shall be advisory for clergy in other positions or working less than full-time; and

*Further resolved*, that this direction shall remain in force until further action by Diocesan Convention.

~~*Further resolved*, that the Compensation Committee of Diocesan Council shall undertake a compensation study to be presented to the 179th Diocesan Convention (2016). The study shall examine compensation both within the Diocese and as compared to like-sized dioceses.~~

*Further resolved*, that the Compensation Committee of the Diocesan Council shall undertake a compensation study to be presented to the 179th Diocesan Convention (2016). The study shall examine compensation both within the Diocese and as compared to like-sized dioceses, with particular attention to equity across gender, race/ethnicity, and tenure.

***Further resolved***, that congregations that employ full-time or part-time lay employees be encouraged to consult with diocesan staff regarding appropriate compensation for said lay employees in specific positions.

### **EXPLANATION**

This resolution is offered by the Diocesan Treasurer and the Diocesan Council, as required by the 165th Diocesan Convention (2002) in connection with its adoption of a resolution concerning compensation. The resolution, adopted in 2002, required that the Diocesan Treasurer recommend annually an inflationary adjustment to the required minimum cash compensation for full-time clergy working in congregations and on the Bishop's staff. As contemplated in 2002, the present resolution is advisory for clergy in other positions, and for clergy who are working less than full-time. The compensation figures included in this resolution reflect no recommended inflationary increase from 2015 to 2016.

The 0% increase reflected in the minimums given above is due to the 0.7% DECREASE in the "Consumer Price Index All Items – All Urban Consumers" for the Chicago-Gary-Kenosha Metropolitan Statistical Area ("MSA") and the overall Midwest region on a not-seasonally-adjusted basis for the 12-month period ending on June 30, 2015. 2015. ([http://www.bls.gov/regions/midwest/news-release/ConsumerPriceIndex\\_Chicago.htm](http://www.bls.gov/regions/midwest/news-release/ConsumerPriceIndex_Chicago.htm)) Historically, the increase has been computed with reference to this MSA and region.

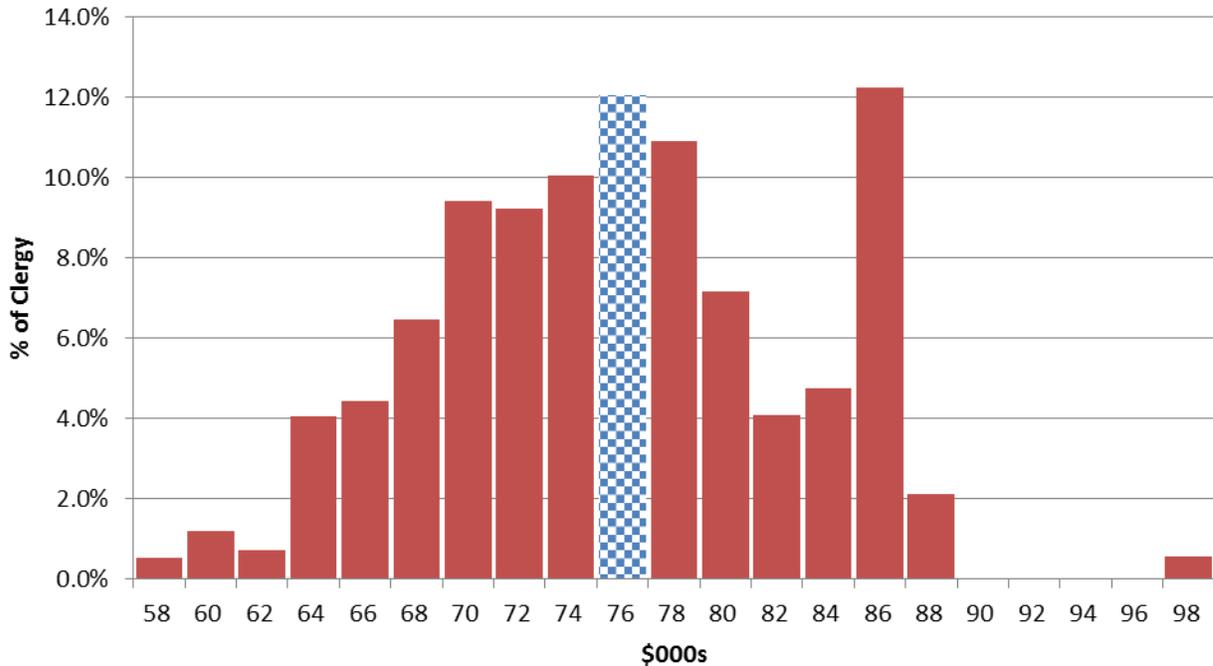
As these are minimum cash compensation amounts, we recommend that parishes pay their full-time clergy above these levels based on tenure (e.g., with that particular church or as an ordained clergy), parish size (e.g., average Sunday attendance or annual budget), parish growth, diversity in programming, etc. In cases where parishes wish to pay more than these minimums, but have difficulty doing so, other forms of compensation (e.g., such as additional vacation, sabbaticals, professional education) should be offered.

Additionally, resources are available from Bishop's staff and Church Pension Group to assist congregations and clergy with cash compensation determinations. (<https://www.cpg.org/linkservid/81D4964A-AD8D-6DF3-E0E90CEC73082914/showMeta/0/?label=2014%20Church%20Compensation%20Report>)

These minimums, along with total compensation of full-time clergy in the Diocese of Chicago, should be examined at least annually to ensure that Diocese of Chicago clergy are paid fairly relative to their ecclesiastical peers in The Episcopal Church.

To the extent this resolution affects clergy on the Bishop's Staff at St. James Commons, the impact of this adjustment has been reflected in the 2016 budget.

## U.S. Clergy Compensation Distribution



This chart shows how the median<sup>1</sup> compensation of the clergy in the Diocese of Chicago (the plaid bar) compares with the median compensation of Episcopal clergy in other parts of the U.S. In this chart, the horizontal axis indicates compensation ranges of under \$58,000, between \$58,000 and \$60,000, between \$60,000 and \$62,000, etc. The height of the bars correspond to the percentage of total U.S. clergy (5,151) who fit in the salary ranges shown on the horizontal axis. For example, about 12% of U.S. clergy work in dioceses whose median compensation is between \$74,000 and \$76,000, which is the range for the median of the Diocese of Chicago.

The weighted (by number of clergy in the Diocese) average median Episcopal clergy compensation in the U.S. is over \$74,800 and Chicago’s median is \$75,400. A large diocese (over 100 clergy) with the lowest median is Atlanta, with median compensation of \$71,000 and the highest is Texas at \$85,900.

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<sup>1</sup> The median is the middle of the group, meaning that 50% of the clergy have higher compensation and 50% have lower compensation.

All data is provided by Church Pension Group in its 2014 “Compensation Report.” Compensation includes, but is not limited to, cash salary, utilities, payments made for Social Security and housing (either by the housing allowance or, if rectory is provided, as 30% of salary. This compensation does not include pension fund payments.

# H-178

**The 178<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention  
Diocese of Chicago  
November 20-21, 2015**

**Subject: Mandating State Licensing of Gun Dealers—PASSED**

**Sponsor: The Reverend Bryan Cones, Peace and Justice Committee of the Diocese of Chicago**

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## **RESOLUTION**

**Resolved**, that the 178th Annual Convention of the Diocese of Chicago distribute information to each congregation and suggest discussion regarding the need for state licensing of gun dealers.

**Further resolved** that the 178<sup>th</sup> Convention of the Diocese of Chicago endorse the Do Not Stand Idly By Campaign, an interfaith, broad-based community effort of the Metro Industrial Areas Foundation to introduce smart gun technology and pressure publicly-funded gun buyers (law enforcement and military) to purchase weapons only from responsible gun manufacturers employing safer practices and technologies.

**Further resolved** that this convention commend to congregations participation in the Do Not Stand Idly By Campaign and direct the Diocese through its Peace and Justice Committee to provide information about ways congregations can participate.

## **EXPLANATION**

Do Not Stand Idly By is an interfaith, broad-based community effort to change the marketplace for gun in the United States, first by pressuring gun manufacturers to provide the same smart gun technology they produce and sell in other countries, technology very similar to the button on your smartphone that recognizes your thumb. Secondly, Do Not Stand Idly By is pressuring chiefs of law enforcement and the military, which account for 40 percent of gun purchases in this country, to patronize only those manufacturers and vendors that agree to commonsense measures regarding record keeping, security, and cooperation with law enforcement. More information and ways to participate can be found at [donotstandidlyby.org](http://donotstandidlyby.org).

1. State licensing of gun dealers would promote best practices, discourage theft, and thwart illegal sales and straw purchases, including the following:

- ▶ Law enforcement inspections;
- ▶ Background checks for employees;
- ▶ Videotaping of all gun sales;
- ▶ Video surveillance and improved security; and
- ▶ Restrictions on the location of gun dealers and ranges.

2. On average 1,000 people die each year from gunshot wounds in Illinois (half homicides and half suicides).

3. Guns are used in 70% of all homicides.

4. The cost of a single gun homicide is \$441,000 (including law enforcement, medical costs, court costs and prison) and is paid by taxpayers.

5. While the vast majority of gun dealers operate responsibly, a small and unscrupulous group of them are disproportionately responsible for the sale of guns that victimize citizens.

6. Oversight of dealers is critical because gun dealers represent a major source of illegally trafficked firearms.

7. Four Chicagoland dealers sold nearly 20% of guns recovered from crime scenes in Chicago.

7. The State of Illinois licenses and regulates a wide range of professions to promote public safety, health, and welfare, including funeral directors, hair braiders, etc. The State needs to license gun dealers.

Adoption of this resolution is not expected to require expenditures that would have an impact on the diocesan budget.

I-178

**The 178<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention  
Diocese of Chicago  
November 20-21, 2015**

**Subject: On Being Socially Responsible Investors in Israel and Palestine—NOT PASSED**

**Sponsor: The Reverend Anthony Vaccaro, Peace and Justice Committee of the Diocese of Chicago**

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**RESOLUTION**

*Resolved*, that the 178<sup>th</sup> Convention of the Diocese of Chicago direct the Diocesan Foundation ~~to place on its No Buy List those US and foreign corporations that provide goods and services that support the infrastructure of Israel's occupation of the West Bank and Gaza and publish the names of such corporations in an edition of E-Connect by July 1, 2016.~~

and the Peace and Justice Committee to work together to develop a proposed investment policy regarding Israel and Palestine, to be presented to the 179<sup>th</sup> Convention of the Diocese of Chicago.

**EXPLANATION**

The Executive Council of the Episcopal Church, at its meeting of October 7-10, 2005 in Las Vegas, Nevada, adopted a resolution receiving and commending the report of the Committee on Social Responsibility in Investments, and directing that Committee to “engage in dialogue with and, where appropriate, to file shareholder resolutions with companies which operate in the Occupied Territories, in which the [Episcopal Church] owns shares and whose products or services contribute to violence against either side, or contribute to the infrastructure that supports and sustains the Occupation, such as settlements and their bypass roads, the security barrier where it is built on Palestinian land, and demolition of Palestinian homes.”

In the ten years since the Executive Council's decision to go down the road of corporate engagement and positive investment in the Church's work for a just peace in Israel/Palestine, the number of Israeli settlers in the occupied Palestinian West Bank and East Jerusalem has increased from approximately 430,000 in 2005 to over 650,000 today. During more than two decades of peace talks, the Israeli government has been supporting the development of new

settlements throughout the occupied territories of the West Bank. These settlements are illegal under international law. These “facts on the ground” have eroded the prospects for a two-state solution and hopes for peace. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s statement, in the days before the Israeli election, that there would never be a Palestinian state on his watch is but a confirmation of what has been unfolding already in the occupied territories for decades. This status quo – permanent occupation with no solution in sight – is unendurable for the 4.4 million Palestinians who are now living in the third or fourth generation of occupation. In the West Bank, Palestinians experience: the demolition of homes as forms of collective punishment; the educational and health effects of having to pass through multiple security checkpoints that turn short journeys into long, unbearable commutes; and mass incarceration of Palestinians, including youth, many of whom are held under “administrative detention” without charge or access to trial for extended periods, all in the name of security, by Israeli armed forces. It is time to use the No-Buy List as a small step on the long road to a just peace in Israel and Palestine.

By including on its No-Buy List those US and foreign corporations that provide goods and services that support the infrastructure of Israel’s occupation of the West Bank and Gaza, the Diocese will be taking a stand that future investments held by the Diocesan Foundation on behalf of the Diocese and diocesan entities will not support the infrastructure of this occupation now in its forty-eighth year. This resolution does not call for the selling of any current investments; rather, it asks that the Diocese discontinue financial support in the form of future investments.

Adoption of this resolution is not expected to require expenditures that would have an impact on the Diocesan budget.

J-178

**The 178<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention  
Diocese of Chicago  
November 20-21, 2015**

**Subject: Welcoming of Syrian and other international refugees—PASSED**

**Sponsor: The Reverend Kara Wagner Sherer**

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**RESOLUTION**

*Resolved*, that the 178<sup>th</sup> Convention of the Diocese of Chicago directs the Bishop and the Bishop's Staff to communicate to the Illinois Governor Bruce Rauner the Convention's support for the welcoming of Syrian and other international refugees, regardless of their religious affiliation, and that the Convention urges the governor to support financially the existing government programs to resettle refugees; and

*Further resolved*, that the Convention urges Episcopalians throughout the Diocese to contact Governor Rauner and other elected officials and urge them to support government programs for refugee resettlement; and

*Further resolved*, that the Convention encourages congregations to become involved in supporting refugee resettlement.

**EXPLANATION**

Our Baptismal covenant calls us to "work for justice and peace and promote the dignity of every human being."

The Episcopal Church and individual Episcopalians are already supporting the ecumenical partnership organization RefugeeOne ([www.refugeeone.org](http://www.refugeeone.org)), which has resettled 131 Syrian refugees this year,

The Chicago City Council adopted a resolution on November 18, 2015 which "reaffirms the City of Chicago's status as a sanctuary city, and its commitment to remain a city of sanctuary and refuge for refugees from all around the world ..." and urged city agencies to collaborate to "provide shelter and sustenance for refugee families ...."

The following letter can provide a template for appeals to elected officials. This letter was sent by Charis Davidson, parishioner of St. John's in Chicago, to Governor Haley of South Carolina, her home state.

Dear Governor Haley,

During the years I've lived and studied in South Carolina, there have been many times I've disagreed with you. There have also been times I've been encouraged and inspired. I was grateful for your leadership in removing the Confederate flag from the Statehouse grounds and in the aftermath of South Carolina's historic flooding. I know that you have a hard job, and that we'll never agree on everything. However, I am heartbroken and feel betrayed by your change of stance yesterday on allowing Syrian refugees to enter South Carolina.

Governor Haley, I'm utterly baffled that you, as the child of immigrants to South Carolina, would refuse to welcome and house innocent victims who are fleeing for their lives. As I've watched the news play out in Syria and Iraq these last several months I've said that this must have been what the beginnings of World War 2 looked like, as the unthinkable evil that was Nazi Germany began. And in the past couple of days I've watched governor after governor declare that Syrian refugees will not be welcome in their states. This must be what it was like to witness the Holocaust- to see entire nations destroyed by unthinkable evil, to watch innocent families flee for their lives and yet have nowhere to go. I am shocked at the heartlessness displayed by so many Americans, and feel helpless in the face of hate and ignorance.

Advent is coming soon- the season when we as Christians remember Jesus' first coming into this world, and his promise that he will come again and make all things right. We also remember Herod's brutal slaughter of innocent children, and Jesus' family being forced to flee into Egypt. And so, since I have no idea what else to do, I will grieve, I will cry and pray for Syria and those whose country has been destroyed. I will pray that Christ returns swiftly and set all things right, and I will beg you to change your mind.

Sincerely,  
Charis Davidson