

**RESOLUTION FOR THE 134TH ANNUAL CONVENTION OF THE
THE DIOCESE OF WESTERN MICHIGAN
APRIL 25 – 26, 2008**

Subject: **Building houses, raising awareness, transforming lives – a partnership
between Habitat for Humanity and the Diocese of Western Michigan**

Originators: Mr. Bruce Banghart and the Rev. Dan Scheid – St. Augustine of Canterbury
Church, Benton Harbor

Resolved, that this 134th Convention of the Diocese of Western Michigan (**aim**) to fully fund 5 houses for Habitat for Humanity affiliates (one in each deanery) throughout the Diocese of Western Michigan over the next 10 years, beginning in 2009. **To accomplish this, we invite each congregation to pledge** to the diocese a minimum of 0.5% of its annual operating budget every year for 10 years, beginning in 2009. (*This pledge will be in addition to the annual diocesan assessment.*) The diocese will **disburse all monies collected** to a local Habitat for Humanity affiliate in one of the five deaneries the cost of building one house (approximately \$84,000) every 2 years. Any collected funds unspent at the end of this 10 year period will be divided equally among the 5 Habitat for Humanity affiliates for use as they see fit.

Rationale: As Christian people, it is important to ask, “What in the life and teaching of Jesus supports this resolution?”

The Diocesan Mission Statement states that the people and Bishop will strive to proclaim and manifest God’s love to all persons so that hope may overcome despair. It is also the vision of the people with the promises of their baptism to intentionally develop new models of ministry. With this mission in mind, and the fact that the Diocese has already endorsed Habitat for Humanity by supporting the Jimmy Carter Works Project in 2005, we ask that the Diocese, through its congregations and deaneries, establish this outreach program. Successful completion of this resolution will build five affordable houses for partnering families throughout the Diocese. It will increase the visibility of the Episcopal Church throughout Western Michigan. It will give congregations and individuals an excellent opportunity to join in fellowship by volunteering, should they choose, on the build in their deanery. We propose that this program be administered by a committee comprised of one person from each deanery. This committee will be responsible for selecting the Habitat for Humanity affiliate to receive the grant and for promoting and organizing the program within his/her deanery.

Habitat for Humanity is a Christian non-profit housing organization that seeks to eliminate substandard housing by engaging the community and partnering families to provide them a quality, affordable place to live. Habitat for Humanity changes peoples’ lives by moving individuals and families from desperate housing to a decent home, by promoting responsible home ownership for adults and modeling responsible home ownership for their children, and by transforming neighborhoods from blight to beauty. Jesus’ life and teaching calls us to use our resources to promote justice by not only caring for the poor among us, hut also by standing in solidarity with the poor. A diocesan partnership with Habitat for Humanity would help us live into the Gospel and our Baptismal Covenant.