

**RESOLUTION FOR THE 135<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL CONVENTION OF  
THE DIOCESE OF WESTERN MICHIGAN  
APRIL 24-25, 2009**

**SUBJECT:** Church Wide Task Force on Older Adult Ministries

**ORIGINATOR:** Ellyn Weihl, Trinity Episcopal Church Grand Ledge, and a member of the National Church's Senior Ministries Committee; and the Vestry of Trinity Grand Ledge.

**RESOLVED**, that this 135th Convention of the Diocese of Western Michigan urge the 76th General Convention to continue a Task Force on Older Adult Ministries to determine programs currently being offered by congregations, dioceses and provinces, to establish a method of sharing this information; and to explore ways that the church can expand ministries by, with and for older adults and to explore how we might connect with one another in intergenerational opportunities. The task force will be comprised of individuals with a background in this ministry area and will represent a cross section of our church. The task force will work collaboratively with the Evangelism and Congregational Life Center and report annually to the Executive Council and provide a complete written report to the 77<sup>th</sup> General Convention.

**AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the General Convention request the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget and Finance to consider a budget allocation of \$75,000 for the implementation of this resolution.

**RATIONALE:** As a Christian people, it is important to ask, "What in the life and teaching of Jesus supports this resolution?"

Many retired people model an active lifestyle by becoming mentors and educators of other parishioners and by providing leadership in service to the elderly. Over one in three Episcopalians is age 65+ and they range from very active to the homebound members. Another 41% are age 45-64, which means 3 of every 4 members are age 45 or older.

Currently one in every eight Americans is age 65 or older, and over one in four live alone. Every hour, 330 Americans reach the age of 60. These same baby boomers will start turning 65 during this triennium. Within 10 years, the age 85+ population will increase by 40%. This unprecedented rapid growth of the older adult population nationwide and worldwide and the resultant challenges to the social and economic system demands response from the church.

To raise awareness of these opportunities and challenges, the work of this proposed task force is in concert with the priorities for the mission of the church as established by the Executive Council in the following ways:

**Doing Justice and Alleviating Poverty** by encouraging outreach to homebound, institutionalized and all those marginalized through poverty and illness. This brings Christ's

message of love and hope through a ministry by, with and for older adults, their families, and caregivers.

**Claiming Our Identity** by calling attention to the contributions of older adults to the church, while promoting their roles in developing spiritual and service ministries by, with and for all generations.

**Growing Congregations** by developing ways to recognize and honor the wisdom and gifts of older adults in the life of the church and community.

**Strengthening Governance and Foundations for Mission and Promoting Anglican Partnership** by recognizing that this work cannot be done without the awareness and collaboration of a myriad of church, faith-based and community resources. This would encourage a new kind of networking matrix for the church nationwide and worldwide.