

Submitted August 7, 2021

Resolution: Affirming Gender-Diverse and Trans Identities

**Resolved**, That the 133<sup>rd</sup> Convention of the Diocese of Oregon calls upon the Diocese and all its institutions and congregations to fully embrace, respect, and uphold trans and gender-diverse people in all facets of its life, particularly by respecting and using individuals' pronouns (including "they/them" and neo pronouns); avoiding using exclusively binary language in liturgies and other communications; supporting trans and/or non-binary youth and their families; and for its employees, facilitating access to health care and insurance that wholly affirms the gender identities of non-binary as well as binary people;

**Resolved**, That this Convention directs the Secretary of the Convention to write to the Church Pension Group (CPG) and the Episcopal Church Medical Trust (ECMT) urging them to change internal systems and actively work with the providers with which they contract to cease perpetuating harmful and discriminatory practices that force misgendering as a condition of obtaining healthcare and retirement benefits for gender diverse employees;

**Resolved**, That this Convention hereby creates a Trans and Non-Binary Task Force charged with producing guidelines and/or tools for Diocesan institutions and congregations to voluntarily conduct an assessment of practices and develop a plan to implement improvements, including but not limited to restroom access and signage, liturgies and formation activities, communications online and in print;

**Resolved**, That this Task Force shall consist of no fewer than 6 and no more than 12 members, as determined by the Bishop, with preference given to those who are non-binary, trans, and/or gender diverse or who have personal and/or professional experience with the trans and non-binary communities; with half to be directly appointed by the Bishop (including the Task Force Chair) and half, by the Bishop upon recommendation of the Chair of Standing Committee; And be it further

**Resolved**, That the Trans and Non-Binary Task Force will report its progress to the 134<sup>th</sup> Convention of the Diocese of Oregon.

**Explanation:**

In 2012, General Convention amended the non-discrimination canons of The Episcopal Church (2012-D002, 2012-D019) by adding "gender identity and gender expression." Almost a decade later, we are still working to live into this call to affirm and support transgender and non-binary people in the life of the Church, from the forms we fill out to the language we use in worship. One of the ways we fall short of our ideal is how we treat non-binary employees, lay and ordained. In 2009 (2009-D032), General Convention "commit[ed] The Episcopal Church not to discriminate in employment of lay employees based on [...] gender identity or gender expression."

In 2021, vendors like the Episcopal Church Medical Trust and the Church Pension Group, which administer employment benefits for The Episcopal Church, require employees to declare their gender as “M” or “F” — even when these options are inappropriate or unnecessary, especially for gender-diverse Oregonians recognized with an X on their state issued IDs. Misgendering individuals causes serious harm, including the deaths of trans and gender diverse individuals, and falls short of our Baptismal Covenant commitment to respect the dignity of every human being.

Beyond forms and databases limited to binary identities, The Episcopal Church continues to need to live fully into a world that does not assume binary gender. From our liturgies and other communications, phrases like “sisters and brothers” are used with the intent of being inclusive, and yet these salutations exclude gender identities outside of the male/female binary. Given the scope of the issues, we ask that this Diocese support the formation of a task force to produce guidelines and/or tools for Diocesan institutions and congregations to assist with the goal of full inclusion of non-binary and transgender people.

We ask this Diocese and the wider Church to make good on the commitments we have made, requiring vendors to stop misgendering individuals, engaging in ongoing reforms to include people of all gender identities and expressions, and reporting what we are learning with and from one another.

Submitted by:  
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