

**RESOLUTION TO BE PRESENTED TO THE FORTY-THIRD ANNUAL
CONVENTION OF THE DIOCESE OF WEST TENNESSEE**

Proposer: EDWTN Task Force on Becoming Beloved Community

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Title: **Creation of Becoming Beloved Community Commission in The Episcopal
Diocese of West Tennessee**

Purpose: WHEREAS, numerous General Convention resolutions have addressed the issue of racism, including Resolution 2015-A182 from the 78th General Convention in 2015 which urged dioceses and parishes to create opportunities to identify and address the sin of racism in their respective contexts; and

WHEREAS, communities in the Episcopal Diocese of West Tennessee (the Diocese) were part of the plantation economy of the Mississippi Delta, including parts of East Arkansas and North Mississippi; and

WHEREAS, several worship spaces still in use in the Diocese were constructed through the uncompensated labor of enslaved persons; and

WHEREAS, it is likely that some of the wealth of the Diocese and her congregations was derived from the uncompensated labor of enslaved persons; and

WHEREAS, the city of Memphis was the location of the assassination of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., on April 4, 1968, during Dr. King's visit to the city to advocate on behalf of sanitation workers; and

WHEREAS, several congregations in the Diocese have done extensive research into

their history with the institution of slavery, notably Calvary Episcopal Church;

WHEREAS, several congregations in the Diocese have offered the Sacred Ground program of The Episcopal Church, a film and readings based dialogue series on race grounded in faith; and

WHEREAS, in 2021, the leadership team of the Diocese identified racial healing and social justice as one of the diocesan priorities to be pursued; and

WHEREAS, the Bishop convened a diocesan task force in 2023 to begin the process of prayerfully discerning how the Diocese might engage in activities and efforts towards dismantling the sin of racism; and

WHEREAS, we share a common faith, life, and mission as baptized Christians and Episcopalians in the Diocese; and

WHEREAS, Galatians 3:28 informs us “there is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus”; therefore be it

Text:

RESOLVED that this 43rd Diocesan Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of West Tennessee establish a Becoming Beloved Community (BBC) Commission; and be it further

RESOLVED that the BBC Commission be comprised of 12 individuals to be appointed by the Bishop; and be it further

RESOLVED that building upon the work of the task force, the BBC Commission will continue researching the history of the Diocese as it pertains to our involvement in the sin of slavery and racism; and be it further

RESOLVED that the BBC Commission identify opportunities for all persons in the Diocese to commit themselves in prayer, study, and dialogue about the sin of racism including, but not limited to, book studies, film viewings, special liturgies, and Bible studies; and be it further

RESOLVED that Episcopalians in the Diocese support the ongoing ministry of the BBC Commission through prayer and active participation in work of the BBC Commission.