2026 DIOCESAN CONVENTION

RESOLUTIONS

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TITLE: R1-2026 | Resolution to the 82ND General Convention to Remove Prayer 18 from the Book of Common Prayer or for Use in Public Worship

PROPOSED BY: The Very Rev. Dr. Pamela Dolan, Church of St. Martin, Davis

DATE SUBMITTED: August 24, 2026

RESOLUTION:

RESOLVED, That this 116th Convention of the Diocese of Northern California adopts the following resolution and hereby directs the Secretary of this Convention to forward this resolution to the Secretary of General Convention of The Episcopal Church as a duly authorized resolution from this Diocese; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Diocese of Northern California requests that the 82nd General Convention consider the removal or revision of Prayer 18 on page 820 of the Book of Common Prayer; and be it further

RESOLVED, That until such time as Prayer Book revision should occur, the General Convention of the Episcopal Church urge that this prayer not be used in public worship.

EXPLANATION:
The Episcopal Church officially repudiated the Doctrine of Discovery in 2009, with the passage of General Convention resolution D035. That resolution called on the church to eliminate the doctrine's "presence in its contemporary policies, program, and structures." Since then, the Episcopal Church has worked to educate its members about the Doctrine of Discovery and to advance the goals of the resolution.

However, the first clause of this prayer reveals grounding in the same ideology that underlies the Doctrine of Discovery. The underlying belief is that God "gave" the land that we now call the United States to the people who identify as citizens of this country; the "us" in this clause is almost certainly not the indigenous people of this continent. Such a belief is antithetical to a more realistic view of the history of this nation and the ways in which the land was in fact taken by force from the people who already inhabited it.

To continue to use this prayer in public worship undermines efforts to heal relationships between the church and the original inhabitants of this land and to tell the truth about our history. At best, this prayer reinforces a story that needs to be disrupted; at worst, it invokes God as an agent of violence and oppression.

Prayer 18, "For Our Country," is the first prayer under the heading "Prayers for National Life" on page 820 of the Book of Common Prayer. The full text is as follows:

"Almighty God, who hast given us this good land for our heritage: We humbly beseech thee that we may always prove ourselves a people mindful of thy favor and glad to do thy will. Bless our land with honorable industry, sound learning, and pure manners. Save us from violence, discord, and confusion; from pride and arrogance, and from every evil way. Defend our liberties, and fashion into one united people the multitudes brought hither out of many kindreds and tongues. Endue with the spirit of wisdom those to whom in thy Name we entrust the authority of government, that there may be justice and peace at home, and that, through obedience to thy law, we may show forth thy praise among the

nations of the earth. In the time of prosperity, fill our hearts with thankfulness, and in the day of trouble, suffer not our trust in thee to fail; all which we ask through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

FISCAL IMPACT: None

TITLE:R2-2026 Resolution to Change in Voting Rules for Clergy-in-Charge

Proposed change to the Constitution of the Diocese of Northern California

PROPOSED BY: The Rev. Cn. Julie Wakelee, Canon to the Ordinary

REPRESENTATIVE AT CONVENTION: The Rev. Cn. Julie Wakelee, Canon to the Ordinary

DATE SUBMITTED: July 21, 2026

RESOLUTION:

RESOLVED, That Article 5, Section 4 of the Constitutions of the Diocese is hereby amended to read as follows:

Article 5
Convention

Section 4. Clergy in good standing who are ~~actually and~~ canonically resident in the Diocese *and actually resident in the Diocese or an adjacent diocese (defined as bordering the Diocese of Northern California)*, and clergy of churches in full communion with the Episcopal Church who are in charge of a congregation in this Diocese *(defined as rector, vicar, or priest-in-charge)* and actually resident in this Diocese *or an adjacent Diocese,* shall have seat, voice and vote in the Convention.

Explanation

Clergy leading our churches now include those living just over the bounds of our diocese. These are devoted clerics who, because of cost of living, family circumstances, or other reasons, cannot relocate. They are faithfully leading congregations as salaried clergy and should have seat, voice, and vote.

We anticipate that this situation will continue, especially in more remote areas (such as the far north and east of the diocese, and in areas where the cost of living is prohibitive, especially for one-income households (for example, closer to the San Francisco Bay Area). This will not affect supply clergy, retired clergy, or any other cleric not in charge of a congregation.

As a proposed change to the Constitutions of the Diocese, this resolution must be passed by at least 50% + 1 of the delegates to convention, at two succeeding annual conventions.

Fiscal Impact: None

TITLE: R3-2026 | Redefining Special Focus Parish Process

PROPOSED BY: The Rev. Cn. Julie Wakelee, Office of the Bishop

DATE SUBMITTED: August 13, 2026

RESOLUTION:

RESOLVED, That the Diocesan Convention of the Diocese of Northern California amend the Canons regarding Special Focus Congregations as follows:

Canon 32, IV F, Sec. 32.9

Special Focus Congregations

Sec. 32.9. In the event a Parish has not (a) paid in full the agreed amount of a Rector's compensation, including benefits and pension, or (b) paid in full and in a timely fashion all other proper expenses and charges of a Parish, including Diocesan Mission Apportionment, or (c) called a Rector after a reasonable time, or (d) complied with Episcopal Church Canon I.7, "Of Business Methods in Church Affairs," or (e) represented itself at Diocesan Convention (unless the absence of representation is approved by the Ecclesiastical authority), then the Standing Committee may by a majority vote and with the consent of the Ecclesiastical Authority designate said parish as a "Special Focus Parish."

Sec. 32.10. After a parish is designated a Special Focus Parish, the Ecclesiastical Authority will appoint a team from the Congregational Development Group strongly encourage the congregation to participate in the Capacity Discernment program, or another similar program approved by the Ecclesiastical Authority other designated individuals to assess said parish and recommend a course of action including, but not limited to: (a) intentional redevelopment, (b) relocation, (c) merging or partnering, or (d) dissolution and closure. The Ecclesiastical Authority may also identify a consultant to work with the congregation during the assessment process beyond the one provided through Capacity Discernment. While in Special Focus Parish status, if no cleric is currently serving the congregation, the Ecclesiastical Authority will confer with the leadership of the congregation to ensure that ecclesiastical services by a priest are arranged at least monthly.

Sec. 32.11. Whenever a Special Focus Parish shall recover sufficient strength to fulfill the financial and other obligations of a Parish, the Standing Committee may by a majority vote and with the consent of the Ecclesiastical Authority end designation as a Special Focus Parish.

Sec. 32.12. If a congregation is in Special Focus Parish status for no less than eighteen twelve months, the Standing Committee may by a two-thirds vote and with the consent of the Ecclesiastical Authority, submit a resolution to Diocesan Convention to change the status of the Parish to that of an Organized Mission at the next scheduled Diocesan Convention. The congregation will remain in union with convention. A Special Focus Parish may at any time petition Diocesan Convention to become an Organized Mission upon a majority vote by Convention. Two parishes or two missions may at any time petition the Diocesan Convention for merger upon a majority vote by Convention.

Sec. 32.13. In the event a Parish ceases to accede to the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church or to these Canons and the Constitution of this Diocese, the Standing Committee by a two-thirds vote with the consent of the Ecclesiastical Authority may change the parish's status to that of an Organized Mission.

thirds vote with the consent of the Ecclesiastical Authority may change the parish's status to that of an Organized Mission.

Sec 32.14. Upon being designated an Organized Mission, the congregation shall wind up the affairs of the Parish corporation so that title to any and all real estate is transferred to the Diocesan Corporation known in law as The Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Northern California, subject to the provisions of the Constitution and Canons of this Diocese and of the laws of the State of California.

EXPLANATION

In 2025, the Episcopal Diocese of Northern California (hereafter referred to as EDNC) joined with staff of the Sierra Pacific Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) to offer a program called Capacity Discernment. It is designed to help churches at inflection points a chance to discern their next steps with a cohort of like-size congregations. This program had been run successfully in the Diocese of Oregon (in partnership with the ELCA synod there) and we customized our curriculum based off what our neighbors shared with us. Six churches (5 Episcopal and 1 Lutheran) participated. All reported finding the process helpful, and as this resolution comes to vote, we will be starting our second year of programming.

The current model for Special Focus Parishes assumes resources (multiple consulting teams) that are out of step with current realities. We simply do not have the time or person-power to handle more than one church every year and a half.

On the other hand, the Capacity Discernment approach allows multiple churches to do thoughtful, prayerful discernment work together – building community, sharing ideas and stories, learning together. A core "design team" made up primarily of Synod and Diocesan staff, leads the monthly online meetings, and each church is assigned a trained "companion" who attends the meetings and works with the church between classes – helping frame parish meetings, coaching, being a support.

This newer model allows us to provide a higher level of support, with no real change in expense, and with a more realistic timeframe and effort. We observed last year that one of the beautiful benefits of the process was new relationships between congregations, as well as some deep and faithful discernment work. We love that this program helps to break down a sense of isolation among small churches. We want all of our churches to thrive, and this is one powerful path to achieve that goal, knowing that what that means looks different in each case.

We realize that at some point we may find (or need) another model, so we have left that possibility open in this proposed change.

FISCAL IMPACT: None

TITLE: R4-2026 | Resolution for Vestry of the Whole

PROPOSED BY: The Rev. Cn. Julie Wakelee, Canon to the Ordinary

REPRESENTATIVE AT CONVENTION: The Rev. Cn. Julie Wakelee, Canon to the Ordinary;

The Rev. Dr. Stephen Hassett, PIC, Ascension, Vallejo

DATE SUBMITTED: August 13, 2026

RESOLUTION:

RESOLVED, That **Canon 33** of the Episcopal Diocese of Northern California be amended to include the option for Vestry of the Whole as a leadership model for small churches, as detailed below.

CANON 33

The Vestry or Board of Directors

Sec. 33.1. In each incorporated Parish the Vestry shall be and constitute the Trustees, Directors or other persons who, by the laws of the State, or Articles of Incorporation, are empowered and authorized to manage the affairs or conduct the business of such Parish.

Sec. 33.1.1. By virtue of their election as a member of the Vestry, they shall become and be the Trustees, Directors, or other managing body of the Corporation of the Parish; and

33.1.2. Whether elected, chosen, convened, acting or referred to, as Vestry, Trustees, or Directors, or as a Vestry, or a Board of Vestry or otherwise, they shall always be deemed to be the same body and as acting in all capacities in which they may be authorized to act under the statutory or Canonical law or both.

Sec. 33.2. The Vestry shall consist of not fewer than nine nor more than fifteen members, provided that notice of any proposed change of an existing number shall be duly given at least sixty days previously by the person officiating at a regular Sunday Service, and further provided that the Vestry of a parish in Ranges A, B, and C of the Congregational Ranges published annually by the Board of Trustees may consist of as few as five members.

Sec. 33.2.1. Members of the Vestry shall be communicants whose names shall be duly enrolled in the Register of the Parish, sixteen years of age or older, and who are regular in their attendance at services, and are stewards of their time, talent, and treasure for its support.

Sec. 33.2.2. They shall not be under suspension as Communicants; but no suspended communicant who shall have appealed to the Bishop to remove such suspension shall be disqualified, either as a member of Vestry or as an elector, until the Bishop has passed upon such an appeal and sustained the suspension.

Sec. 33.2.3. All members of the Vestry, except the Rector, shall be Laypersons and qualified electors of the Parish.

Sec. 33.2.4. The Vestry shall be elected by secret, written ballot.

Sec. 33.2.5. When a member of the Vestry resigns, dies or is lost for any other reason, a replacement shall be appointed by the Vestry to serve until the next annual meeting of the Parish.

Sec. 33.2.6. The number of members, the method of selection, the length of their term of office and manner of rotation, if any, shall be determined by each Parish and shall be specified in the Parish By-Laws, provided no term shall exceed three years and there be a lapse of at least one year following three years' service on a Vestry.

Sec. 33.3. A quorum for a meeting of the Vestry shall consist of a majority of all members thereof, all having been given due notice thereof.

Sec. 33.4. No meeting of the Vestry shall be valid unless either the Rector or one of the Wardens shall be present.

Sec. 33.5. The Rector shall preside at all Vestry meetings except that the Rector may appoint the Senior Warden as the presiding officer, provided however, in the case of a Parish without a Rector, or when the Rector is absent from the Diocese, the Senior Warden shall preside.

Sec. 33.6. The Rector or Priest-in-Charge, or in the case of their absence, the Clerk, shall call a meeting of the Vestry as soon as possible after their election.

Sec. 33.6.1. At this meeting, the Rector shall appoint one member of the Vestry to be Senior Warden. When a Parish is without a Rector, the Senior Warden shall be elected by the Vestry from one of their number.

Sec. 33.6.2. The Vestry shall elect another of their number to be Junior Warden;

Sec. 33.6.3. In the case of a vacancy in the Rectorship, the Vestry shall elect both Wardens. of the Parish.

Sec. 33.6.4. At the same meeting, the Vestry shall elect a Clerk and a Treasurer.

Sec. 33.6.5. Both Wardens must be communicants and otherwise qualified electors

Sec. 33.6.6. The Wardens shall serve until the next Annual meeting of the Parish.

Sec. 33.6.7. The Clerk and the Treasurer shall by virtue of their election become Clerk and Treasurer, respectively, of the Parish Corporation. They shall continue in office until their successors are elected.

Sec. 33.7. Each Parish shall regulate for itself through its Vestry, the stated meetings of its Vestry.

Sec. 33.7.1. Special meetings may be called at any time by the Rector, or both Wardens, or by any three members of the Vestry, by giving three days' notice, by mail, to each member of the Vestry.

Sec. 33.8. The Vestry, at each annual meeting of the Parish, shall make a full, written report of the temporal condition of the Parish, in every particular.

Sec. 33.8.1. The outgoing Vestry shall also make suggestions, through its Wardens, as it may deem wise and helpful to the Parish, and as may conduce to the increase of zeal and devotion of the people.

Sec 33.9

Upon an affirmative vote at its Annual Meeting, any Parish or Mission which has an Average Sunday Attendance (ASA) of thirtyFive or fewer for the previous calendar year may apply to the Ecclesiastical Authority for authorization to use a "Vestry/Mission Committee of the Whole" (hereafter referred to as "Vestry of the Whole") for a period of one year. Upon request by the Parish/Mission, such authorization may be renewed annually in the sole discretion of the Ecclesiastical Authority so long as the Parish's ASA is thirty-five or less.

The Vestry of the Whole shall consist of all persons in the Parish/Mission who meet the voting qualifications specified in Canon 33.2.1, Canon 33.2.2, and Canon 33.2.3, and each meeting must have at least four such members present.

The Vestry of the Whole shall operate under a set of written guidelines approved by the Ecclesiastical Authority and published to all members. The Senior Warden, the Junior Warden, the Treasurer, the Clerk and, if there is one, the Rector, Vicar or Priest-In-Charge shall comprise the executive team and

(i) shall serve as the officers of the Parish corporation

(ii) shall meet in executive session with respect to any legal, personnel or other matters required by law to be confidential, and

(iii) shall have full authority to act on such matters except that the Treasurer shall not vote on any matters involving Parish finances. Except as otherwise provided in

this subsection, the other provisions of Canon 33 shall apply to the Vestry as a Whole.

EXPLANATION

Many smaller churches struggle to fill vestry openings each year. This model not only addresses that concern, but it also helps the congregation work more closely together, be transparent in their dealings, and strengthen communication and parishioners' sense of investment in the well-being of the church.

It does not remove the function of the officers as an "executive team", and they will meet apart from the whole for issues regarding personnel and other confidential matters (in a traditional leadership model, this would be considered "executive session.")

In use for several years in the Diocese of El Camino Real, this model has been successfully piloted at Church of the Ascension in Vallejo, which, with Bishop Megan's support and permission, voted to adopt Vestry-of-the-Whole at its annual parish meeting in February of 2025. The congregation has found it to be an extremely effective way to share information and make decisions together. Ad hoc committees are regularly formed to meet between monthly Vestry meetings and to work on matters of fundraising, deferred maintenance, personnel, community life, and mission; reports and agendas are distributed one week in advance of the meeting, and time is given over at every meeting for discussion of church governance processes (including at the diocesan level) so the members of the congregation/Vestry are increasingly equipped to fulil$\bar{A}$ their roles in leadership. The congregation voted unanimously to continue with this model at its annual parish meeting this year.

Any congregations wishing to try this model will seek permission from the Bishop and, if granted, will receive training and ongoing mentoring through the Office of the Bishop staff and/or members of the Congregational Development Team.

FINANCIAL IMPACT: None

TITLE: R5-2026 | Resolution to the 82nd General Convention Adding Thomas Merton to the Episcopal Church Commemorations Calendar

PROPOSED BY: The Rev. Daniel London, Christ Episcopal Church Eureka

DATE SUBMITTED: July 31 (The Feast of St. Ignatius of Loyola)

RESOLUTION:

RESOLVED, That this 116th Convention of the Diocese of Northern California adopts the following resolution and hereby directs the Secretary of this Convention to forward this resolution to the Secretary of General Convention of The Episcopal Church as a duly authorized resolution from this Diocese; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Diocese of Northern California requests that the 82nd General Convention designate December 10 or another appropriate date in *Lesser Feasts and Fasts* as the annual celebration of the life and work of Thomas Merton, Trappist monk, poet, social critic, contemplative, and spiritual writer who lived in Kentucky; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the 82nd General Convention direct the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music to prepare or review previously prepared biblical lessons, collects and other liturgical resources commemorating the life and work of Thomas Merton.

EXPLANATION: Thomas Merton was a tremendously influential Trappist monk, theologian, and mystic who bridged Western monasticism with Eastern spirituality. As the author of his bestselling autobiography *The Seven Storey Mountain,* Merton used his writing to advocate for racial and environmental justice, nonviolence, ecumenism, and interfaith dialogue. Merton has already been included in *Holy Women and Holy Men* (*HWHM*) and *A Great Cloud of Witnesses*, although he is not yet included in the official calendar of *Lesser Feast and Fasts.* His inclusion in *HWHM* encouraged the Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia to add Merton to their *Calendar For All the Saints*, because his father, Owen Merton, was a New Zealander. Since he is included in New Zealand's official calendar, then, *a fortiori*, he should be included in *Lesser Feasts and Fasts*, having been raised in the Episcopal Church and having lived most of his life in New York and Kentucky.

In June 2024, Episcopal bishops and deputies gathered for the 81st General Convention in Louisville KY, only blocks away from Thomas Merton Square, where Merton had a vision of everyone around him "shining like the sun" (*Conjectures of a Guilty Bystander,* 154). Moments after being elected, Presiding Bishop Sean Rowe referenced Merton's vision on Fourth and Walnut as a "touchstone" for the entire convention. He then concluded his remarks with the following quote from Merton: "What really matters [in times of drastic change] is openness, readiness, attention, courage to face risk" (*CGB,* 206).

About 55 miles away from General Convention 81, Trappist monks were praying for us Episcopalians while hosting several deputies and bishops in their retreat house at the Abbey of Gethsemani, where Merton lived as a monk and hermit from 1941 to 1968. Brother Paul Quenon graciously brought several deputies and bishops to Merton's hermitage, where Merton previously hosted ecumenical guests, including Episcopalians from Nashotah House and Baptists from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

The Abbey of Gethsemani is also home to a set of sculptures created by Walker Hancock and donated to the Abbey by Trinity Episcopal Church in Topsfield MA as a memorial to Episcopal seminarian and martyr Jonathan Myrick Daniels (August 14).

At General Convention, participants sang a beloved hymn tune named "Thomas Merton," a tune that Episcopalians around the world have been singing for decades: Hymn #679 (Canticle 9: The First Song of Isaiah). The hymn tune was written by Episcopal organist and composer Ray Urwin who described Merton and his works as "very important and influential" to him.

This resolution is being sponsored by deputies from the Diocese of Northern California, a region where Merton felt "unutterably happy" and "at home." He offered his final US presentations near the border of Humboldt and Mendocino County, at the Abbey of the Redwoods, before travelling East, where he died by accidental electrocution in Bangkok Thailand.

Background: Merton and Anglicanism

Considered to be the most influential Roman Catholic spirituality author of the 20th century, Thomas Merton wrote about contemplative life, monasticism, prayer, social justice issues, literature, and other faith traditions. He was a pioneer in ecumenical and interfaith dialogue, writing "I will be a better Catholic, not if I can *refute* every shade of Protestantism, but if I can affirm the truth in it and still go further. So, too, with the Muslims, the Hindus, the Buddhists, etc." (*Conjectures of a Guilty Bystander,* 129). He befriended Buddhists such as the 14th Dalai Lama, D.T. Suzuki, and Thich Nhat Hanh; Jewish leaders such as Abraham Joshua Heschel and Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi; and poets such as Wendell Berry, Robert Lax, and Joan Baez. When Pope Francis spoke to the US Congress in 2015, he highlighted "four representatives of the American people": Abraham Lincoln, Martin Luther King Jr., Dorothy Day, and Thomas Merton.

Merton was born in Prades, France to a New Zealand artist and an American Quaker who was baptized in the Church of England. In his bestselling autobiography *The Seven Storey Mountain*, he writes about undergoing baptism in the Anglican Church, but this is disputed since there is no official record of this. He was raised on Long Island, where his father served as the church organist at Zion Episcopal Church in Douglaston NY, a church that Merton attended with pleasure, saying that "one came out of the church with a kind of comfortable and satisfied feeling that something had been done that needed to be done." He expressed fondness for the church's eagle lectern with wings outspread, the men and women in the procession led by the Cross, and the stained glass window with the anchor that stirred up his imagination of heroic voyages at sea. He described his experience of worshipping in the Episcopal Church as "very good" for him, giving him his first taste of humanity's most fundamental desire for religion and the opportunity to stand with others in acknowledging a common dependence on God (*The Seven Storey Mountain,* 14 - 15).

While studying at Ripley Court in England, Merton attended the local Anglican Church where he enjoyed singing hymns and hearing portions read aloud from *Pilgrim's Progress*. During this time, he began praying more sincerely and felt "happy and at peace." After attending Oakham School in Rutland and Clare College in Cambridge, Merton studied at Columbia University in New York, where he read books such as *Mysticism* by Anglo-Catholic author Evelyn Underhill (June 15) and *Gerard Manley Hopkins* by G. F. Lahey, books that compelled him to convert to Roman Catholicism in 1938.

On December 10, 1941, Merton entered the Order of Cistercians of the Strict Observance, the Trappists, at the Abbey of Gethsemani, near Bardstown, Kentucky, where he began his writing career. While Merton criticized the Church of England in his writings, he was also not afraid to dole out strident criticisms of certain aspects of the Roman Catholic Church and his own Cistercian community, such as institutional hypocrisy, rigid dogmatism, and complicity in systemic social evils.

During the 1960s, Merton became close friends with Anglican priest and theologian, the Rev. Arthur Macdonald "Donald" Allchin, who served as the librarian of Pusey House, Oxford, and residentiary canon at Canterbury Cathedral. Through his friendship and correspondence with Allchin, Merton discovered a new appreciation for Anglican Divines, especially Lancelot Andrewes, and Anglican Mystics, such as Thomas Traherne. He expressed a desire to write a book on Anglican Mystics and, in a letter to Allchin, he exclaimed, "The best of Anglicanism is unexcelled."

It was also in the 1960s that Merton fell in love with a student nurse whom he refers to in his journals as "M." Although the details of the relationship remain ambiguous, he acknowledged that his intimacy with her was inappropriate and in violation of his monastic vows. James R. Lauridson describes the relationship as overwhelming and humiliating for Merton, emphasizing it as "the last of a series of encounters with the feminine that allowed Merton to develop a healthy human and monastic understanding of himself and the feminine" ("Merton and the Feminine," 3). His biographer Michael Mott wrote that, after the relationship, "Thomas Merton never again talked of his inability to love, or to be loved." (Mott, *Seven Mountains,* 438).

The experience of belovedness remained central throughout Merton's writings and influenced later spirituality authors such as Henri Nouwen and Richard Rohr. In *New Seeds of Contemplation,* Merton asserts, "The beginning of the fight against hatred, the basic Christian answer to hatred, is not the commandment to love, but what must necessarily come before in order to make the commandment bearable and comprehensible. It is a prior commandment, *to believe*. The root of Christian love is not the will to love, but *the faith that one is loved*. The faith that one is loved *by God*." (*NSC,* 75)

The spiritual insights expressed in his books, essays, poetry, and journals continue to inspire learning, dialogue, spiritual practice, prayer, and social activism across a variety of Christian denominations and faith traditions today. Raised in the Episcopal and Anglican tradition, Merton serves as a stimulating model and compelling catalyst for ecumenical partnership and interfaith collaboration. In a journal in 1957, he wrote, "If I can unite in myself, in my own spiritual life, the thought of the East and the West, of the Greek and Latin Fathers, I will create in myself a reunion of the divided Church, and from that unity in myself can come the exterior and visible unity of the Church. For, if we want to bring together East and West, we cannot do it by imposing one upon the other. We must contain both in ourselves and transcend them both in Christ." (*A Search for Solitude,* 87). And finally, in an address given to Christian monks in Calcutta in 1968, just weeks before he died, Merton invited his listeners (and readers) into a profound experience of Christian unity, saying, "The deepest level of communication is not communication, but communion. It is wordless. It is beyond words, and it is beyond speech, and it is beyond concept. Not that we discover a new unity. We discover an older unity. My dear brothers, we are already one. But we imagine that we are not. And what we have to recover is our original unity. What we have to be is what we are." (*Asian Journal,* 308). Adding Merton to the calendar of *Lesser Feasts and Fasts* will not only expand the reach of his contemplative and socially-engaged wisdom, it will also lead us into deeper unity with our fellow Christians and thus help fulfill Christ's prayer that we may all be one.

FISCAL IMPACT: None.

TITLE: R6-2026 | Resolution to the 82nd General Convention to add Josiah Royce to the Episcopal Church Calendar

PROPOSEDBY: Rev. Jim Richardson, Trinity Cathedral, Sacramento and

The Very Rev. Seth Kellermann, Rector, Emmanuel Church, Grass Valley

REPRESENTATIVEATCONVENTION: Rev. Jim Richardson, Trinity Cathedral, Sacramento and The Very Rev. Seth Kellermann, Rector, Emmanuel Church, Grass Valley

DATESUBMITTED: August 15, 2026

RESOLUTION:

RESOLVED, That that this 116th Convention of the Diocese of Northern California adopts the following resolution and hereby directs the Secretary of this Convention to forward this resolution to the Secretary of General Convention of The Episcopal Church as a duly authorized resolution from this Diocese; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Diocese of Northern California the 82nd General Convention to designate September 14, or other appropriate date, on the Calendar of the Church Year and Lesser Feasts and Fasts commemorating the life of Josiah Royce, philosopher, theologian and historian, and be it further

RESOLVED, That the 82nd General Convention directs the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music to prepare appropriate propers, collects and other liturgical resources, and be it further

RESOLVED, That this resolution be considered as the "first reading" for adding Josiah Royce to the Church Year Calendar and Lesser Feasts and Fasts.

EXPLANATION:
Josiah Royce (Nov. 20, 1855 — Sept. 14, 1916), born in Grass Valley, in the Diocese of Northern California, was a philosopher, historian and author. Royce is chiefly known for developing the concept of "the beloved community." Royce's ideas had an enormous influence on a mid-twentieth century generation of Christian leaders, particularly Black pastors in the Civil Rights movement. Royce's theological concepts especially underpinned those of Howard Thurman, Martin Luther King Jr., and John Lewis. Royce's ideas have continued to echo through the decades including in the ministry, preaching and leadership of our retired Presiding Bishop Michael Curry.
After his early upbringing in Grass Valley, Royce graduated in 1875 from the University of California when there was only one campus, Berkeley. Royce Hall, the signature building at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), is named for him. Royce went on to pursue graduate degrees in philosophy and teach at Harvard.

In 1913, Royce fully developed his idea of the "beloved community," published in "The Problem of Christianity." Preeminent California historian Kevin Starr calls the book "Royce's undoubted masterpiece." Royce expounded on what he called his "Philosophy of Loyalty," exploring how people are loyal to self, family, town, tribe and nation. For Royce, the highest form of loyalty is to the "beloved community," which he defined as humanity living in universal harmony.

For Royce, a genuine human community is one in which the members share both memory and hope in common. People who hold only shared memory tend toward nostalgia, and those who hold only hope tend toward utopian fantasy. Sharing memory (especially of tragedy) and also hope (especially of redemption), leads to the emergence of genuine, or "beloved" community.

Royce saw the "beloved community" as possible only through "supernatural" powers: "That which actually accomplishes these triumphs is what [the Apostle] Paul means by the divine grace."

"The beloved community embodies," he wrote, "values which no human individual, viewed as a detached being, could even remotely approach."

Royce further wrote: "Jesus unquestionably taught, in the best-attested, and in the best-known, of his sayings, love for all human beings. … The individual whom you are bidden to love as your brother and your neighbor is, even while Jesus depicts him, transformed before your eyes."

Eventually, Royce mapped this to the Holy Eucharist: We hold in common the memory of the death of Jesus and also the hope of resurrection; this makes us the Body of Christ — the "beloved Community."

From Royce's "beloved community" philosophy grew the principles of non-violent resistance practiced by King and others in the Civil Rights movement.

Royce was a professor at Harvard at a time of pseudo-scientific theories of white superiority were popular in elite universities.

Royce skewered such ideas in a short book: "Race Questions, Provincialism, and Other American Problems."

"When men marshal all the resources of their science to prove that their own race-prejudices are infallible, I can feel no confidence in what they imagine to be the result of science," he wrote. "We all have illusions, and hug them. Let us not sanctify them by the name of science. For my part, then, I am a member of the human race, and this race which is, as a whole, considerably lower than the angels, so that the whole of it very badly needs race-elevation. In this need of my race, I personally and very deeply share."

FISCAL IMPACT: None

TITLE: R7-2026 | Resolution to the 82nd General Convention for the Second Reading to add Howard W. Thurman to the Episcopal Church Calendar

PROPOSED BY: Rev. Jim Richardson

REPRESENTATIVE AT CONVENTION: Rev. Jim Richardson

DATE SUBMITTED: August 10, 2026

RESOLUTION:

RESOLVED, That this 116th Convention of the Diocese of Northern California adopts the following resolution and hereby directs the Secretary of this Convention to forward this resolution to the Secretary of General Convention of The Episcopal Church as a duly authorized resolution from this Diocese; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Diocese of Northern California petitions the 82ndGeneral Convention to designate April 10, or other appropriate date, on the Church Calendar as the annual celebration of the life and work of Howard W. Thurman, pastor, educator, theologian, and civil rights leader; and be it further

RESOLVED, That this resolution be considered as the second reading of the resolution (2024-C011) approved by the 81st General Convention; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Diocese of Northern California commends to our congregations the celebration of Howard W. Thurman's life and work, and invites other dioceses to join us in this celebration.

EXPLANATION:

The 81st General Convention directed the Standing Commission of Liturgy and Music to prepare appropriate propers, collects and other liturgical resources commemorating the life and work of Howard Thurman on the Church Calendar (2024-C011). Such additions to the calendar must be approved by two General Conventions. This resolution creates a legislative vehicle for the second reading of the proposal put forward by this diocese and the Diocese of California to add Thurman to the Church Calendar.

Howard Washington Thurman (Nov. 18, 1899 – April 10, 1981), had an enormous influence on the civil rights movement and its leaders. Born in Florida, Thurman was educated at Morehouse College and ordained a Baptist pastor. He was appointed as the first Black chaplain of Marsh Chapel at Boston University which today has a center bearing his name.

In the 1930s Thurman led a six-month pilgrimage of African Americans to India where he met Mohandas Gandhi who had a critical influence on his work. Incorporating Gandhi's theories of non-violence, Thurman wrote a ground-breaking book in 1949, *Jesus and the Disinherited*, which had a major impact on a young ministry student, Martin Luther King, Jr.

In later years, Dr. King carried Thurman's book in his suitcase in his travels as a leader in the civil rights movement. Thurman also mentored to Pauli Murray, who became the first Black woman ordained an Episcopal priest and is on the Episcopal Church calendar.

After leaving Boston, Thurman founded a racially integrated church in San Francisco. He was named an honorary Canon of the Episcopal Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York City in 1974. Thurman died in San Francisco in 1981.

Ebony magazine once called Thurman one of the fifty most important figures in African American history. In the 1950s, *Life* magazine ranked Thurman among the twelve most important religious leaders in the United States.

In recent years there has been a resurgence of interest in Thurman's life and work. Thurman's book, *Jesus and the Disinherited*, is used in the Episcopal Church Sacred Ground program and as a supplemental text in our Education for Ministry program. Thurman's speeches, articles and books have been the topic of recent seminars, webinars and retreats in a wide spectrum of church and secular settings. And the non-denominational Church for the Fellowship of All Peoples that he founded in San Francisco remains a vibrant worshipping community, which sponsors the annual Howard Thurman Convocation.

Our Episcopal Church Calendar commemorates those who in the past still speak to us in our own time. The calendar includes more than 300 individuals, but only about a dozen are African American, and only a handful are from the twentieth century, including Martin Luther King, Jr., Pauli Murray, W.E.B. Du Bois and Thurgood Marshall. Our calendar honors numerous educators and theologians from a broad array of denominations and religious traditions (Evelyn Underhill, Karl Barth, F.D. Maurice to name three). But the calendar dimly reflects the rich contributions of African American theologians, educators and religious leaders who played an enormous role in shaping the civil rights movement and, more broadly, how we engage with the difficult issues of race and justice in our world today.

Fiscal impact: None