

Title **Resolution submitted to 81st General Convention adjusting
Diocesan assessments to the Wider Church**

Proposer **The Rev. Charles Marks and the Rev. Isaac Petty**

1. WHEREAS, in our post-COVID and ever-changing world, the budgets many dioceses and
2. congregations are further constrained by the increasing costs of ministry, including expenses
3. of building maintenance, equitable compensation, rising healthcare costs, etc.;

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5. WHEREAS it is crucial to keep necessary resources within the local congregations and
6. dioceses so that ministry can thrive on both congregational and diocesan levels; and

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8. WHEREAS, our siblings in the Dioceses of Oklahoma, Arkansas, and East Carolina have
9. adopted substantially identical resolutions at their respective Diocesan Conventions, calling
10. for other dioceses to do the same; now, therefore, be it

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12. RESOLVED, That the 134th Annual Convention of The Diocese of West Missouri submits the
13. following resolution to the 81st General Convention of The Episcopal Church and encourages
14. all other dioceses to endorse this or similar resolutions at their Diocesan Conventions and
15. Councils in advance of the 2024 General Convention:

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17. “RESOLVED, That the 81st General Convention approves an assessment formula
18. (Canon I.4.6(b)) for the period January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2027 based on a
19. single assessment of each diocese. In each year, 2025-2027, the diocesan total
20. adjusted operating income, as reported in the annual diocesan financial report (Canon
21. I.4.6(j) and Canon I.6.4) for the year two years prior to the year to which the
22. assessment is applied [e.g., 2025 assessments are to be based on 2023 actual
23. income figures], shall be reduced by a \$200,000 exemption. A single assessment
24. shall be applied to the remaining amount (balance) at a flat rate of 13.5%; and be it
25. further

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27. RESOLVED, That the 2025-2027 Episcopal Church budget shall be adjusted and
28. managed as set forth in the Canons, Rules of Order, and Executive Council policies
29. and procedures; and be it further

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31. RESOLVED, That the 81st General Convention of the Episcopal Church asks Executive
32. Council to set a plan for lowering the diocesan assessment to 10% by 2030.”

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34. RATIONALE: This resolution calls for action to be taken by the 81st General Convention to
35. lower diocesan assessments and asks the Executive Council of The Episcopal Church to do
36. the hard and discerning work of planning for the future of our Church.

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38. The first and second resolves to be submitted to the General Convention (lines 19-31 above)
39. are modifications of the adopted Resolution A228 of the 80th General Convention, which set
40. the 2023-2024 budget for The Episcopal Church. The present resolution decreases the
41. assessment rate from 15% to 13.5%. For The Diocese of West Missouri, this 1.5% reduction

42. would have equated to nearly \$28,500 remaining in the 2023 diocesan budget for local
43. mission and ministry. The third resolve calls for a two-triennium plan to be created by The
44. Executive Council to reduce the assessment rates to 10%. Again using the calculations for
45. our 2023 diocesan budget, a 10% assessment rather than 15% (after the holdback) would
46. have equated to nearly \$95,000 remaining in our 2023 diocesan budget for local mission
47. and ministry.

48.

49. With over \$600,000,000 in trust assets, The Episcopal Church (DFMS) has a
50. \$50,000,000 annualized budget. Based on Line Item 9 of The Episcopal Church's
51. approved budget, Diocesan Commitments make up over \$28,000,000 of that amount.
52. That amount is 15% (the previous assessment rate) of \$192,000,000. This means that over
53. 20% of all DFMS and diocesan expenditures each year (\$242,000,000) are done at the
54. DFMS level, which we think is an unsustainable proportion given the current state of our
55. Church.

56.

57. In our diocese, there are underfunded churches in rural, suburban, and urban contexts. In
58. many of these communities, The Episcopal Church may be the only church that fully
59. welcomes all persons. Ministering on these margins requires local and diocesan financial
60. resources for viability. The more resources are centralized at higher levels of our church
61. structure, the fewer remain for ministry among the marginalized communities our
62. congregations serve.

63.

64. Many organizations are currently reconfiguring toward sustainability for future generations
65. and it is imperative The Episcopal Church do the same. It is out of love for The Episcopal
66. Church, its ministry, history, and future, that we submit this resolution.
