

Resolution 5 –Seeking Study of a Potential Reunification of the Diocese of Central Pennsylvania and the Diocese of Bethlehem

I. TYPE OF RESOLUTION:

Reunification Study

II. TITLE & AUTHOR OF RESOLUTION:

Seeking Study of a Potential Reunification of the Diocese of Central PA and the Diocese of Bethlehem
Standing Committee

III. RESOLUTION:

Resolved, The Diocese of Bethlehem concurs and agrees to enter into a period of intentional exploration with the Diocese of Central Pennsylvania of their future reunification as one diocese; and be it further resolved that:

This exploration be conducted by both bishops, supported by a Discernment Committee of 10 additional people (comprised of two chancellors, two members of the Standing Committees, two members of Diocesan Council, and two at large members from each diocese selected by each diocese's Standing Committee) with equal representation from each diocese, and be it further resolved that:

The bishops are authorized to engage an outside consultant to assist the Discernment Committee with this process and be it further resolved that:

The Discernment Committee will explore opportunities in the areas of general operations, formation, finance, pastoral care, stewardship, social justice ministries, staffing, and children and youth ministry as well as the gifts, strengths and priorities of each diocese and this Discernment Committee will consider a plan for full reunification as well as any interim sharing of resources and, if feasible, seek to provide a draft timetable for those efforts; and be it further resolved that

This Committee will report its findings quarterly to each Standing Committee and at the 2023 Convention of each of the two Dioceses and be it further resolved that:

Each Diocese will contribute an equal amount, but no Diocese shall contribute more than \$25,000, in the time frame between approval of this resolution and the Diocese's next Diocesan Convention, to accomplish this work.

EXPLANATION: Until 1904, the Diocese of Central Pennsylvania and the Diocese of Bethlehem were historically united as one diocese under the name "The Diocese of Central Pennsylvania" prior to the founding of the Dioceses of Harrisburg and Bethlehem

With the approval of each Convention and the Ecclesiastical Authorities, the Constitution (Article V) of The Episcopal Church and Canon 1.10.6-7 allows for the reunification of dioceses.

We are one family in Christ, and the resilience and health of the Church as well as its mission is strengthened through greater comity, collaboration and shared resources.

Submitted by:

Standing Committee