

## **ESTABLISH A HEALTHY CONGREGATIONS TASK FORCE**

Submitted by:

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### **THE RESOLUTION**

**Resolved**, that the 238th Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts recognizes the critical importance of nurturing healthy communities as defined in our mission strategy; and be it further

**Resolved**, that the characteristics of a healthy congregation are many, including: clergy and lay wellness, healthy power dynamics and boundaries, adherence to Safe Church practices, lay leadership development, and more; and be it further

**Resolved**, that we recognize the need for mental health support for our clergy and parishioners (especially our youth) in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic; and be it further

**Resolved**, that the Bishops be called upon to establish a Healthy Congregations Task Force, made up of clergy and expert lay members, with the mandate to identify the components of what makes up a healthy congregation, catalogs the resources currently available, and recommend additional resources needed to support healthy congregational communities, with a particular focus on mental health supports, and makes a report to the 239th Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts.

### **Explanation For**

We are called by the second goal of our Mission Strategy to “nurture healthy communities where we can care for ourselves and each other.” In the Mission Strategy document, several commitments are called for by individuals and congregations, and by our Bishops and Diocesan Council. Recognizing that this list of commitments is not necessarily complete, and understanding that many of the components of a healthy congregation need to be integrated in a holistic manner, a Task Force can provide the necessary focus to make comprehensive recommendations.

### **Statement Against**

There already exist resources and training to address many of the components of a healthy congregation, so the work of a Task Force would be repetitive.

We adopted the Mission Strategy in 2021, so individuals, congregations and the diocese should already be implementing these practices.

### **Implementation Requirements**

Our Bishops, in consultation with Diocesan Council and diocesan staff, would identify members of the task force to be appointed by our Bishops no later than January 1, 2024. The Task Force would meet regularly to prepare a report which meets the submission deadline for the 239th Diocesan Convention. The Task Force would make a mid-year interim report to Diocesan Council via the Mission Strategy Implementation Committee.

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