

**House of Bishops Spring Meeting
Kanuga Camp and Conference Center
Hendersonville, North Carolina
March 2009**

**General Convention 2009
Preamble for Commitment and Core Values**

We, the Bishops of the Episcopal Church gathered in our March 2009 meeting, call ourselves to the leadership and agreements expressed below as we move forward in the mission of the Church.

We seek to be a mission-minded Church as an expression of our core values encompassed in the Great Commandment, calling us to be a community of love in which all can find their place.

The Experience of General Convention

We, as bishops in community, will designate a time each day in which to share our faith in meaningful conversation with each other. We desire to pause for prayer, spiritual reflection, and discernment during the work of Convention, especially when we are engaged in more difficult and challenging conversations and decisions.

We recognize the usefulness of a variety of action tools, including legislation, continuing conversation, and consensus. We ask that the Convention determine the most timely and appropriate means of proceeding, recognizing the variety of tools available and the potential gain and consequence of each tool used. On sensitive issues, we will be willing to suspend the Rules of Order and go into discussion in smaller groups before proceeding.

We will be diligent in identifying those questions best served by technical response and those requiring adaptive work.

Commitments in Preparation for Convention

We will operate and speak from an experience of Communion within which we seek to discover the way forward in areas of disagreement.

We will encourage our deputations to be fully and broadly informed, to increase our capacity for deep listening (especially when engaged in difficult and discomfiting debate and conversation), so that we, as a Convention and people of faith, can make the best decisions available to us at this time in our life.

We recognize our unique responsibility to guard the faith, unity and discipline of the Church while at the same time reaffirming that the House of Deputies and House of Bishops share a mutuality of governance, representing the whole of our Church.

We commit to be in dialogue with bishops and deputies who speak from a perspective different from our own, and to pray for the whole of the conversation at convention. We encourage our deputies to seek such conversation and prayers.