



Convocation of Episcopal Churches in Europe

Strategic Plan

*The Convocation of Episcopal Churches in Europe is a welcoming community
that knows God loves all people – no exceptions.*

We celebrate our diversity of languages, cultures and nations.

Worshipping together, we rejoice in reaching out to the world and becoming One in Christ.

A Strategic Plan for the Convocation as it moves into the next Episcopate

Where (we believe) God is leading us

Be vibrant congregations, which more fully proclaim and live the Gospel of Jesus Christ;

Develop new communities, where possible in association with ecumenical partners, including indigenous language churches;

Foster ecumenical and interfaith relationships and projects;

Be a progressive and prophetic Christian witness to secular post-Christian European societies;

Engage European policy-makers, along with other churches, in the promotion of justice, peace and the integrity of creation;

Achieve financial stability and sustainability for the Convocation and its constituent churches.

What we need to move forward in our next Episcopate

Configure the Convocation staff to more effectively serve the needs of the Convocation and its congregations;

Enhance cooperation through better communications and consultation between Convocation staff, congregational leadership, committee chairs and deputies to General Convention;

Review key structures that are already in place, such as the Commission on the Ministry of the Baptized (COMB), the Youth Commission, and the European Institute for Christian Studies (EICS), to ensure a coherent process for the raising up and equipping of new leadership for the congregations;

Establish an inventory of skills and experience of clergy and lay leaders in view of sharing such resources more widely within the Convocation;

Develop leadership, ideas and resources for stewardship;

Strengthen the pastoral care of clergy and lay leadership in our churches, giving attention to the welcoming and orientation of new clergy, congregational development and continuing education.

The Bishop we seek

Our next Bishop will inspire and lead us to new places, empowering clergy and lay leadership to translate the Jesus Movement into the European context. Our Bishop will be deeply spiritual and passionate about the Gospel, an inspirational preacher and teacher, approachable and adaptable to the wildly different contexts of each of our congregations.

Our next Bishop will be an able pastor and a good listener to clergy as well as to the members of our churches. He or she will be responsive to the needs of clergy and their families, who often face challenges in their lives and ministries in the complex settings in which they serve. Priority will be given to the care and nurture of established congregations. Two visits are envisaged for the Bishop to make to each congregation in the course of each year.

The Bishop will embrace with enthusiasm the incredible mosaic which makes up our Convocation, expressed in the diversity of languages, cultures, ethnicities, socio-economic status, sexual orientation and gender identities which mark our congregations.

The Bishop's office is presently housed in the Cathedral in Paris, working with a small staff and limited resources, calling for the Bishop to be a good organizer and competent administrator.

It is also critical that our Bishop be competent in languages. The ability to function in at least one of the three major languages of the Convocation (French, German and Italian) will be essential to this office.

Other qualities we seek in our next Bishop include:

Collaborative leadership style: willing to learn and to adapt to new situations, prepared to delegate leadership where needed and eager to access the gifts of clergy and laity within the Convocation as well as outside resources;

Inspirational leader: helping congregations to do together what we cannot do alone, leading us to be more connected and united as a Convocation;

Good communicator: able to use or facilitate the use of new technologies for visibility, training and education;

Spokesperson for a dynamic and progressive Christian witness, along with ecumenical leaders, to government bodies and European institutions;

Committed to actively nurture *youth and young adults* across the Convocation;

Experienced in building ecumenical and inter-faith relations: eager to work collaboratively with ecumenical partners in Europe, the Church of England, the Old Catholics and Lutherans, to envision and implement joint initiatives and projects;

Advocate for the Convocation to The Episcopal Church: articulating the vision and realities of the European churches to General Convention and to the wider church;

Missionary Bishop: thinking strategically about developing new congregations in close consultation with the Committee on Mission Congregations (COMC) and where possible in cooperation with ecumenical partners; making generous use of demographic studies to guide church development strategies;

Able to plan and achieve the Convocation's *financial stability and sustainability* for the future.

Background

This Strategic Plan was developed by a Committee appointed by the Bishop's Council of Advice in early 2017 for that purpose, and presented to the Council of Advice in September 2017. The Council accepted it with minor changes, as presented here and as it will be presented to Convocation Convention 2017 in Wiesbaden.

The Committee consisted of the Rev. Mark Barwick, Chair (Waterloo); Yvonne Cockroft (Munich); Dean Lucinda Laird (Paris); Helena Mbele-Mbong (Geneva); Rev. Stephen Smith (Munich), and Rev. Robert Warren (Clermont-Ferrand); plus Canon Michael Hunn (Presiding Bishop's Office), and met several times, in person and via internet. Their task was to hear what the people of the Convocation want for the future and draw up a strategic plan, especially as we will have new leadership in terms of our Bishop. Their work was based on listening to approximately 200 of the members of the Convocation: feedback from the group discussions at Convocation Convention 2016, consulting all members of the vestries/Bishop's councils, the Council of Advice, all clergy who attended the clergy retreat in June 2016, and a number of others through direct contact. In addition, Bishop Pierre was asked for his views, along with Archdeacon Walter Baer, Convocation Administrator Sophie Plé, a representative of the Church of England and a Bishop of the Old Catholics.