

**Resolution D-180 – Addressing the Epidemic of Addictive Drugs
Submitted by General Convention Deputation**

BE IT RESOLVED, stemming from the call of the 79th General Convention [GC] (Resolution C037: Call to Respond to Opioid Epidemic) for “all dioceses and parishes to respond to the opioid epidemic with training, pastoral care, and liturgy”, that the clergy and lay leaders in the congregations of the Diocese of Missouri provide names and contact information of willing congregants already involved in addressing not only aspects of the opioid epidemic but for ALL addictive drugs (including alcohol, heroin, etc.), for the purposes of sharing information; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Episcopal Recovery Ministries [ERM] be reestablished to include appointments from among the people identified above to develop a central means to access resources from around the diocese, such as speakers, statistics, examples of faith-community action and efforts; suggestions for cooperating with First Responders and others for training to deal with various types of drug episodes; prayers, blessings; basic information on recovery programs and mental health facilities; professionals who specialize in addressing various types of drug addiction and abuse issues; and be it further

RESOLVED, that recognizing the purpose and value of prescription opioid medication in treating both acute and/or chronic, intractable pain, the ERM include in its resources regarding addictive drugs information on realities, risks, and barriers to care and effective treatments or cures for people with chronic pain, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the reestablished ERM report results of its efforts to the 181st Diocesan Convention in 2020 to curate and create “resources for education, prevention, pastoral care, advocacy and partnering with community organizations” as the Diocese of Missouri seeks to respond to the continuing drug abuse epidemic.

RATIONALE: While increased opioid abuse is a significant problem here and throughout the country, in the Diocese of Missouri, alcohol abuse and addiction have been and remain serious drug issues. We need to recognize that substance abuse disorders, access to diagnosis and effective treatment—including appropriate treatments for chronic pain—affect all communities, especially those economically marginalized. Very few congregations in our Diocese will be without members, including clergy, whose families and friends are untouched by the consequences of drug addiction, including splintered households, job loss, criminal action, overdose, and/or death. Expanding the original request of the 79th General Convention Resolution to reflect the needs of this Diocese, we ask that the church respond in ways both practical and pastoral. The full GC resolution is below:

C037: Call to Respond to Opioid Epidemic

Resolved, That the 79th General Convention call all dioceses and parishes in The Episcopal Church to respond to the opioid epidemic with training, pastoral care, advocacy, and liturgy; and be it further Resolved, That dioceses and parishes be urged to: partner with First Responders and others in the medical community to host trainings on how to administer naloxone in the event of an overdose; partner with other faith communities and recovery programs in their local contexts to offer pastoral care to those affected by this epidemic; partner with other faith leaders to advocate with local and state government regarding policies and laws to promote healing and wholeness for those affected by this epidemic; and be it further

Resolved, That the 79th General Convention direct the Office of Government Relations of The Episcopal Church to advocate for the federal government of the United States to address this as public

health crisis, affirming that opioid use disorder is a disease, which needs adequate resources for treatment options; and be it further

Resolved, That the 79th General Convention direct the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music to develop additional liturgical resources to address the needs and concerns of those whose lives have been profoundly affected by this epidemic; and be it further

Resolved, That the 79th General Convention concurrently acknowledge the purpose and value of prescription opioid medications in appropriately treating chronic, intractable, pain; or acute pain resulting from curable, short-term medical conditions; and affirm the work of the medical community to create established medical guidelines supporting people living with pain; and call all dioceses and parishes in The Episcopal Church to partner with the medical community and health nonprofit organizations to understand the realities, risks, and barriers to access to care and effective treatments and cures for people living with chronic conditions and otherwise untreated or undertreated pain; and be it further

Resolved, that the Church recognize that issues of substance use disorders, access to diagnosis and effective treatment, and lack of appropriate treatment for untreated or undertreated pain affect all communities, but especially those marginalized in poverty, racial, gender, and ethnic discrimination, persons with disabilities, and other minority communities; and be it further

Resolved, that congregations be urged to include in the Prayers of the People intercessions for patients, families, and communities affected by substance use disorders and also by untreated and undertreated pain and chronic diseases; and be it further

Resolved, That the 79th General Convention to authorize the Presiding Officers to create a task force to assist in the curation and creation of resources for education, prevention, pastoral care, recovery, advocacy, and partnering with community organizations to be use by dioceses and parishes for the purpose of responding to the opioid epidemic and substance use disorders; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention request the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget, and Finance to consider a budget allocation of \$30,000 for the implementation of this resolution; and be it further

Resolved, That the membership of this task force will be appointed by the Presiding Officers and consist of no fewer than 8 nor more than 14 members; and that the task force be made up of bishops, priests, deacons, and laity; and be it further

Resolved, That the task force will complete this work within two years.