

Affirmation of Diverse Gender Identities

SPONSORS: The Reverends Rachel Field, Greta Getlein, Lisa Ransom, Chris Jones, and Sarah Ginolfi.

CONTACT PERSON: The Rev. Rachel Field; rachelf2000@gmail.com; (802) 522-6730

RESOLVED, That the 188th Convention of the Diocese of Vermont call upon the church in this diocese to fully embrace, respect and uphold transgender and nonbinary people in all facets of its life, particularly by facilitating access to health care and insurance for employees that wholly affirm the gender identities of nonbinary as well as binary-identified people; by respecting and using individuals' pronouns including "they/them"; avoiding using exclusionary binary language; and by supporting nonbinary and/or transgender youth and their families; and be it further

RESOLVED, That this Convention direct the Secretary of the Convention, with a committee of persons to support them in this work if desired, to write to the Church Pension Group (CPG) and the Episcopal Church Medical Trust (ECMT), calling upon them to change internal systems and actively work with healthcare and other benefits providers with which they contract to cease perpetuating harmful and discriminatory practices that force choosing only male or female as a condition of obtaining healthcare and retirement benefits for gender-diverse employees.

EXPLANATION

The Episcopal Church Medical Trust and the Church Pension Group, which administer employment benefits for The Episcopal Church, still require employees to declare their gender as "M" or "F," even when these options are inappropriate or unnecessary, especially for gender-diverse people who are recognized with an X on their state issued IDs (as is legal in many states). This pattern of misgendering – that is, using pronouns (e.g., he, she, him, her, they, them), salutations (e.g., Mr., Ms., Mx., sir, madam) and gender markers (male, female, non-binary) that do not align with an individual's gender identity – causes harm and falls short of our Baptismal Covenant commitment to respect the dignity of every human being.

The resolution also asks the Secretary of this Convention to send a letter conveying this resolution to the Church Pension Group and the Episcopal Church Medical Trust, an important step in naming the impact of CPG/ECMT's limited gender options and calling on them to align their practice fully with the policy of The Episcopal Church.