

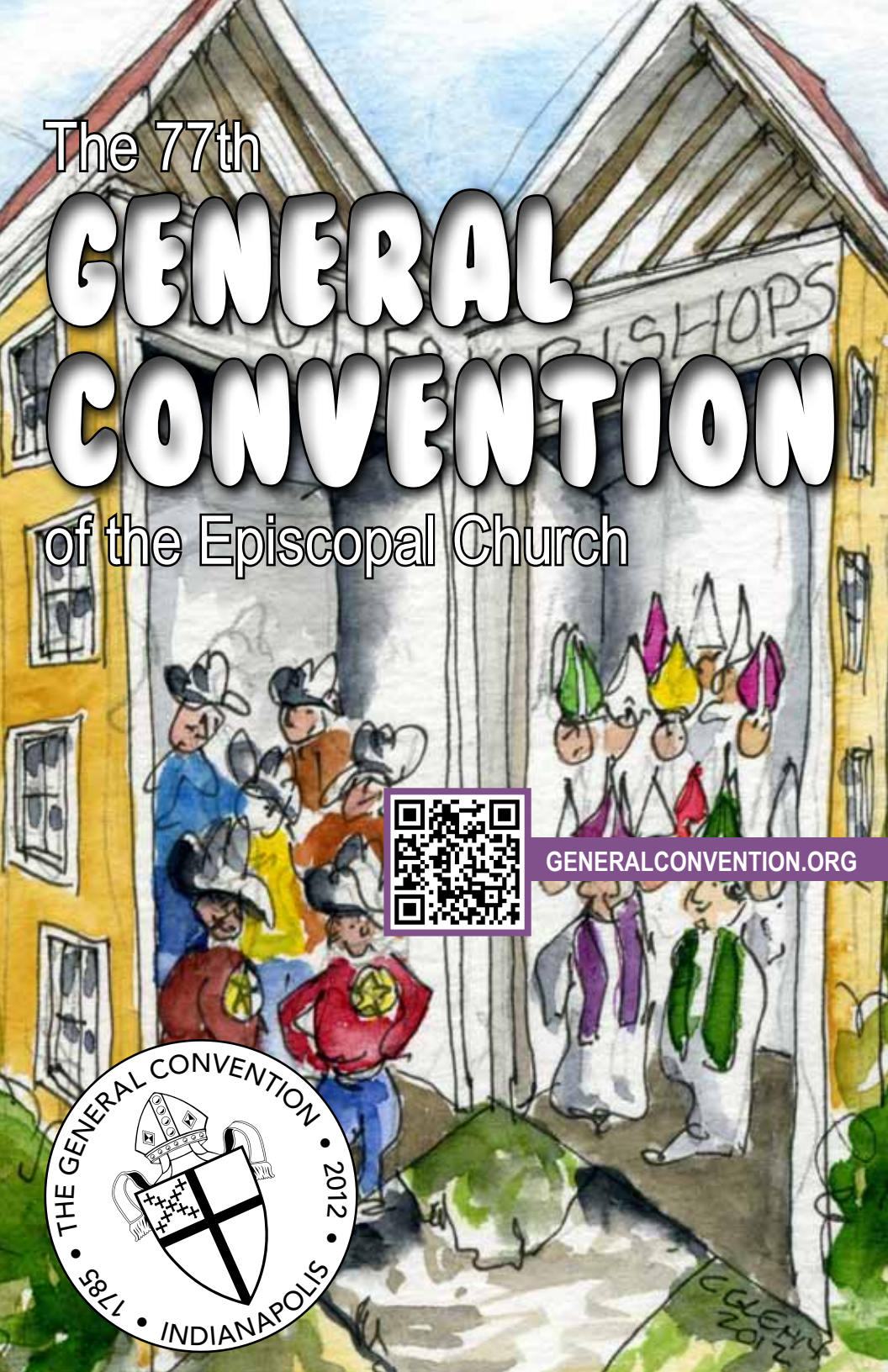
The 77th

GENERAL CONVENTION

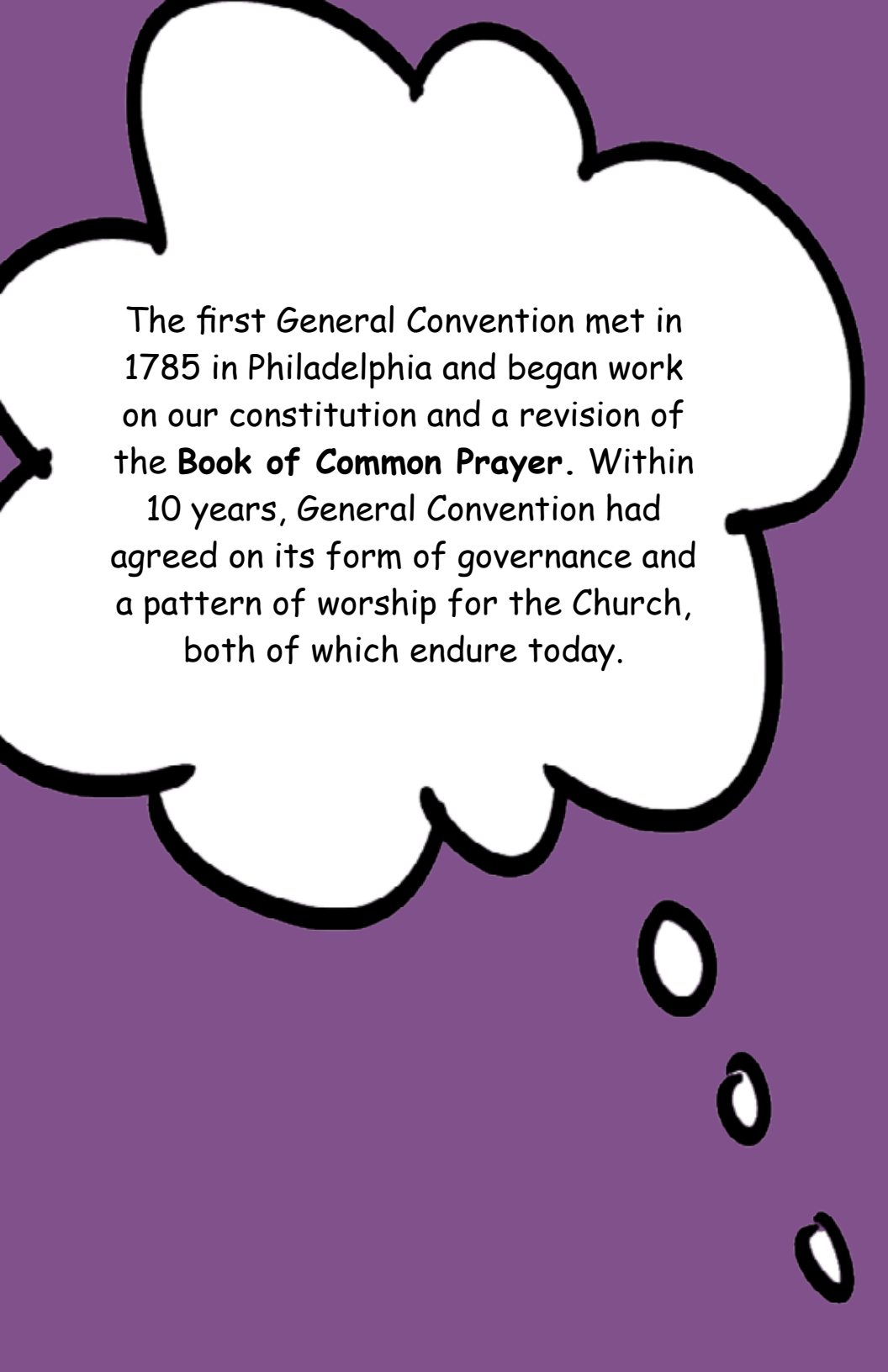
of the Episcopal Church



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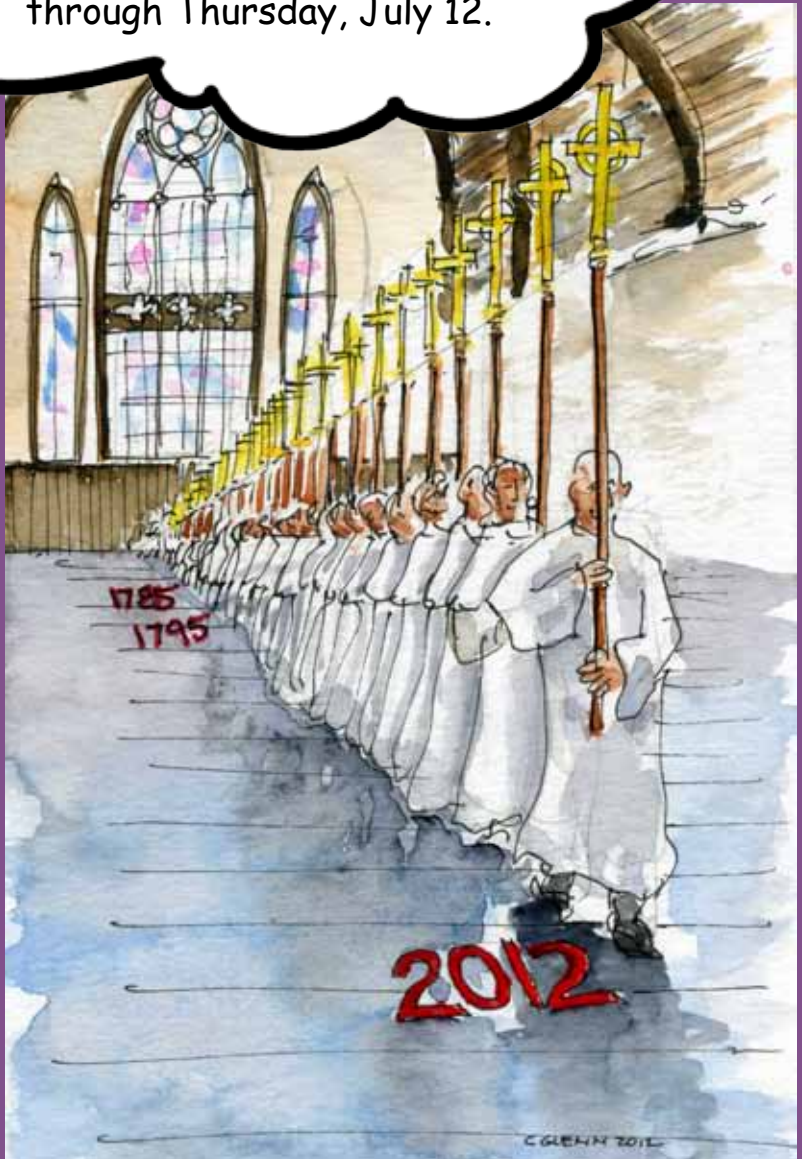


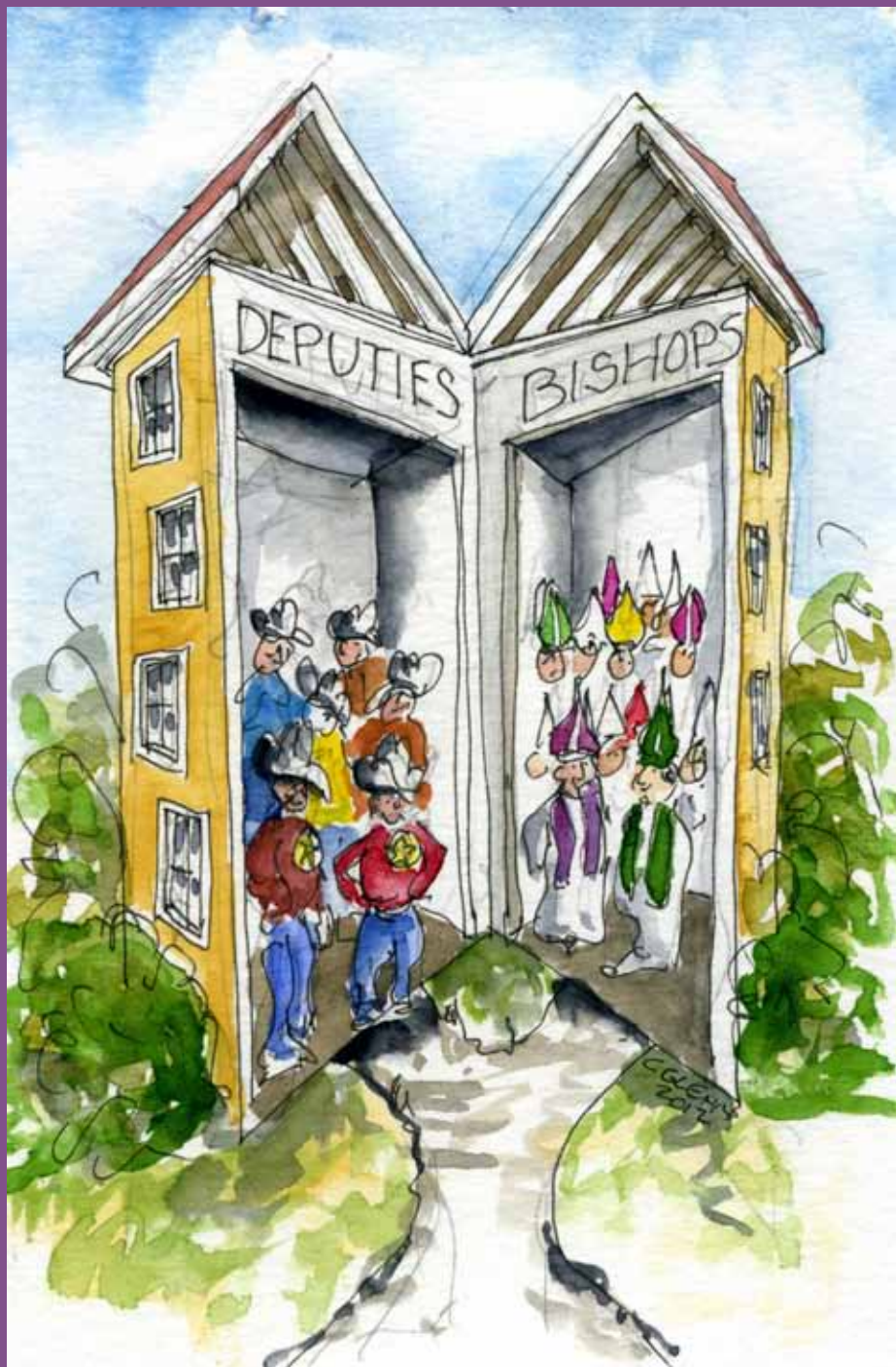
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2012



The first *General Convention* met in 1785 in Philadelphia and began work on our constitution and a revision of the **Book of Common Prayer**. Within 10 years, *General Convention* had agreed on its form of governance and a pattern of worship for the Church, both of which endure today.

In 2012, the 77th General Convention of **The Episcopal Church** will meet in Indianapolis, Indiana, from Tuesday, July 5 through Thursday, July 12.





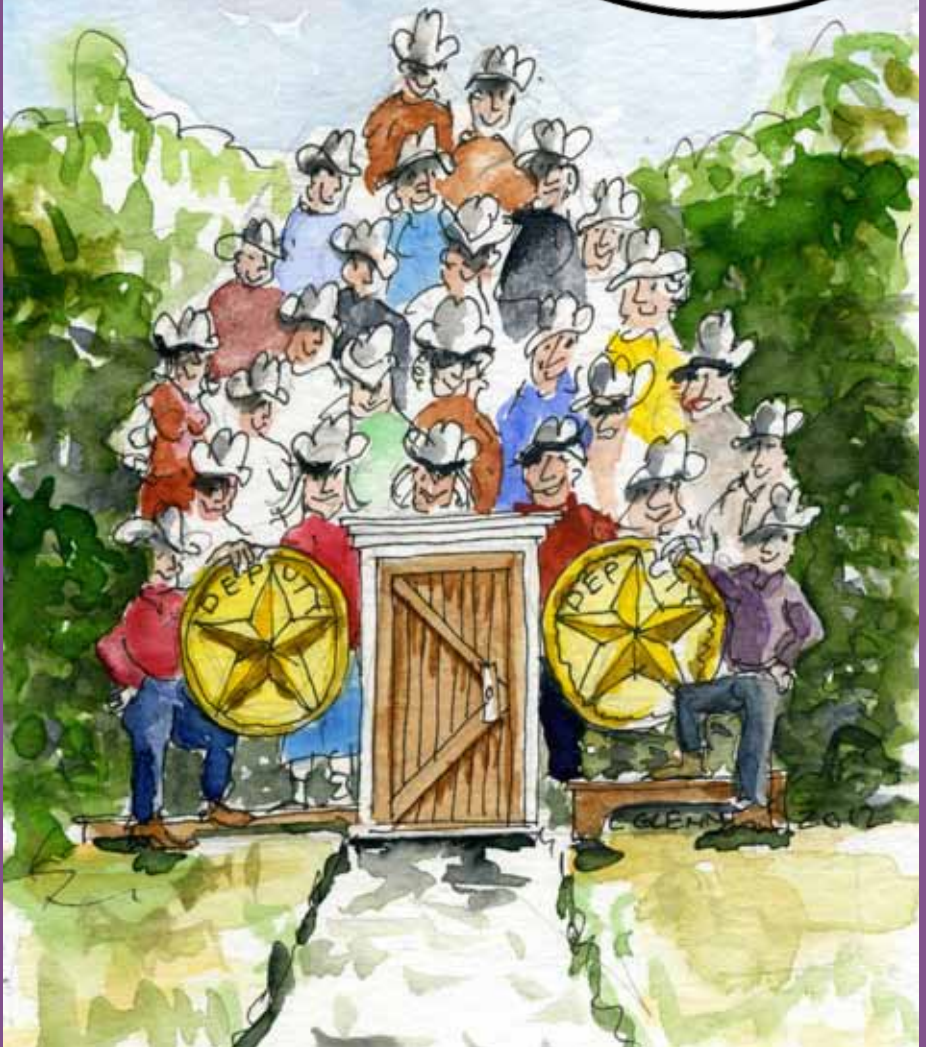
House of Bishops

All bishops of The Episcopal Church, active and retired, are entitled to seat, voice and vote in the House of Bishops. Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori serves as the presiding officer.



House of Deputies

Each of the dioceses, including the Convocation of Churches in Europe and the Navajoland Area Mission, is entitled to elect eight deputies, four lay and four priests and/or deacons. Dr. Bonnie Anderson is president of the House of Deputies.



Deputies are not delegates; that is, they are not elected to represent the electing dioceses, but are free to vote their conscience on the legislation before them for the good of the Church.



They hear testimony, engaging in debate and prayer, and they cannot be instructed to vote one way or another. To expect a deputy to vote a certain way would preclude godly debate and preempt the work of the Holy Spirit.



Deputies are expected to serve on committees when appointed, to attend forums and hearings, to read the reports to the Church from its commissions, committees, agencies and boards (interim bodies of the General Convention), to listen and vote on resolutions being considered by the House.

The House of Deputies and the House of Bishops meet, deliberate and vote separately except for a joint session to hear the budget presentation.

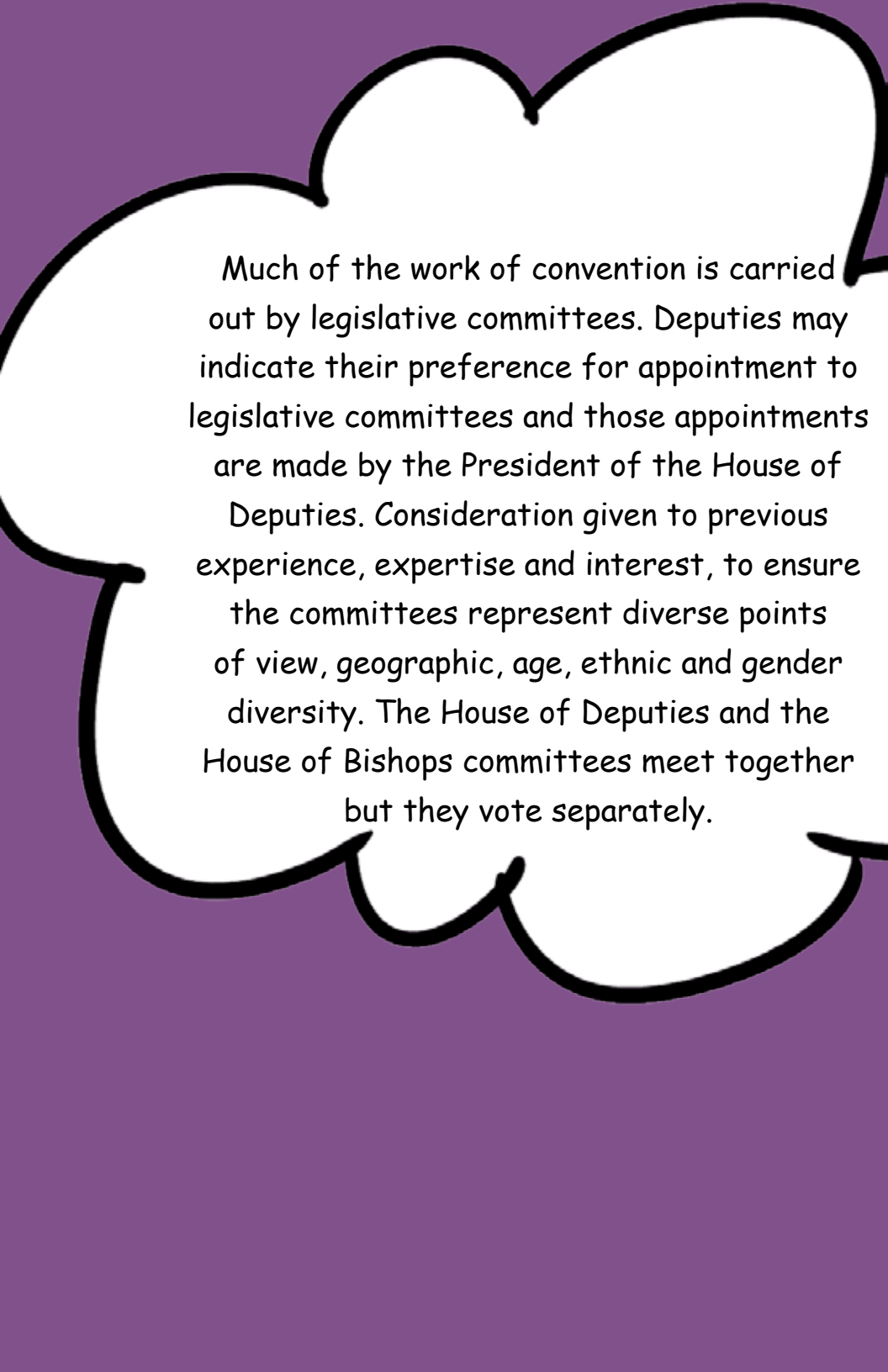


Resolutions come to convention from four sources: interim bodies (A resolutions); bishops (B resolutions); diocesan councils and conventions, and provinces (C resolutions) and from deputies (D resolutions).



For resolutions to be enacted, they must pass both houses in exactly the same language. Either house may amend legislation, but an amendment must be considered by the other house and accepted in the same language, changed or defeated. If it is changed, it must return to the previous house for approval.



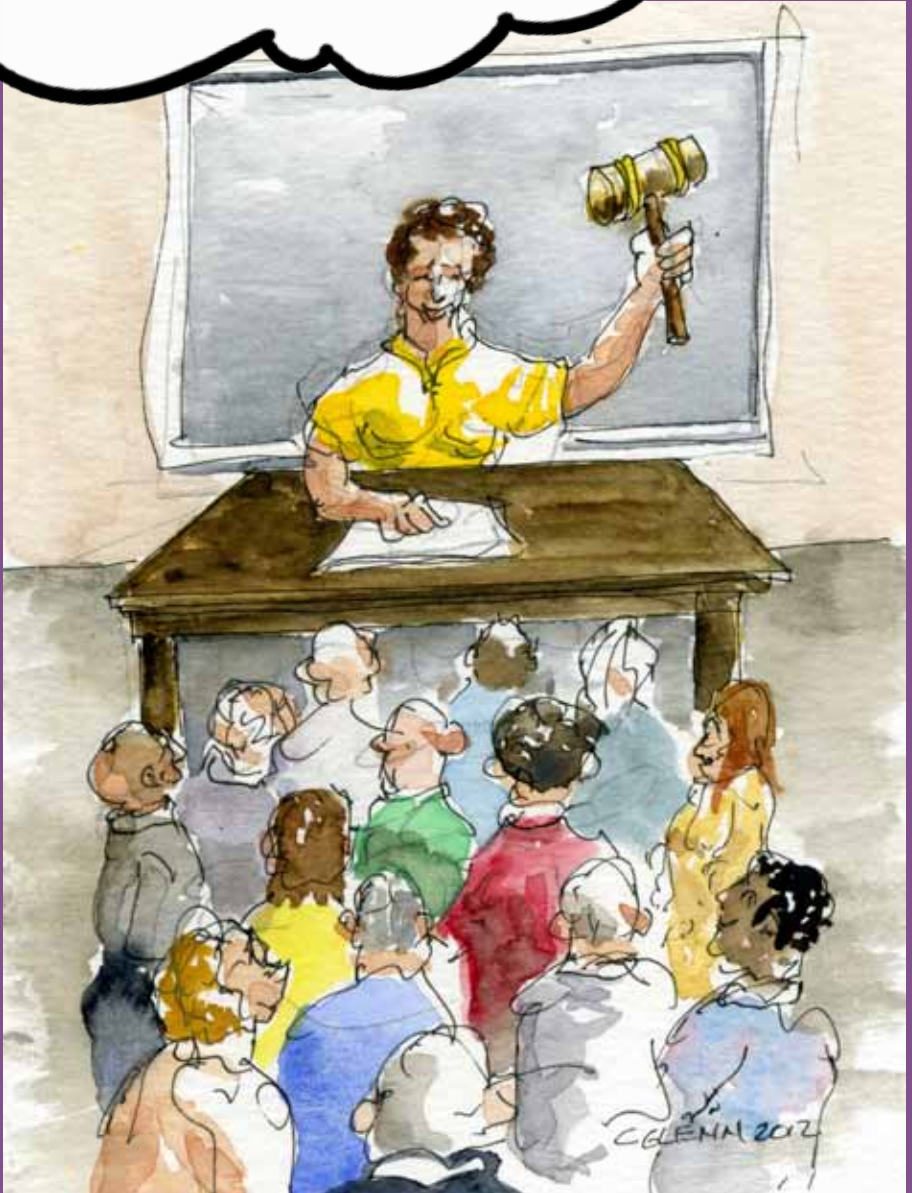


Much of the work of convention is carried out by legislative committees. Deputies may indicate their preference for appointment to legislative committees and those appointments are made by the President of the House of Deputies. Consideration given to previous experience, expertise and interest, to ensure the committees represent diverse points of view, geographic, age, ethnic and gender diversity. The House of Deputies and the House of Bishops committees meet together but they vote separately.

Resolutions that have been proposed for discussion at convention are referred to one of 24 legislative committees. Each piece of legislation must have an open hearing. Deputies, registered alternates, bishops and registered visitors may speak at these open hearings. Committees consolidate, amend and perfect legislation before presenting it to the House.



Debate on the floor of the House of Deputies is governed by the Constitution and Canons of the Church, Rules of Order for each house, Joint Rules of Order and Roberts' Rules of Order.



Deputies are expected to listen respectfully to the views of others and to adhere to the rules, which require, for example, that persons of different points of view alternate at microphones.



General Convention meets prayerfully and worships together daily. Each day bishops, deputies, registered alternates and delegates to the Episcopal Church Women's meeting gather for Bible study and Holy Eucharist.



Both the Houses have designated chaplains, who lead prayer at the beginning and end of daily sessions as well as noonday prayer.



Chaplains are often asked by the presiding officer to offer prayer before the vote on important legislation.

One of the highlights of General Convention is a festival Eucharist in which the United Thank Offering is presented by representatives from each diocese. The offering is gathered in parishes twice each year for the mission of the Church.



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Organizations within the Church offer additional worship services, while volunteers staff a prayer room where continual prayers of intercession are prayed for the work of convention.



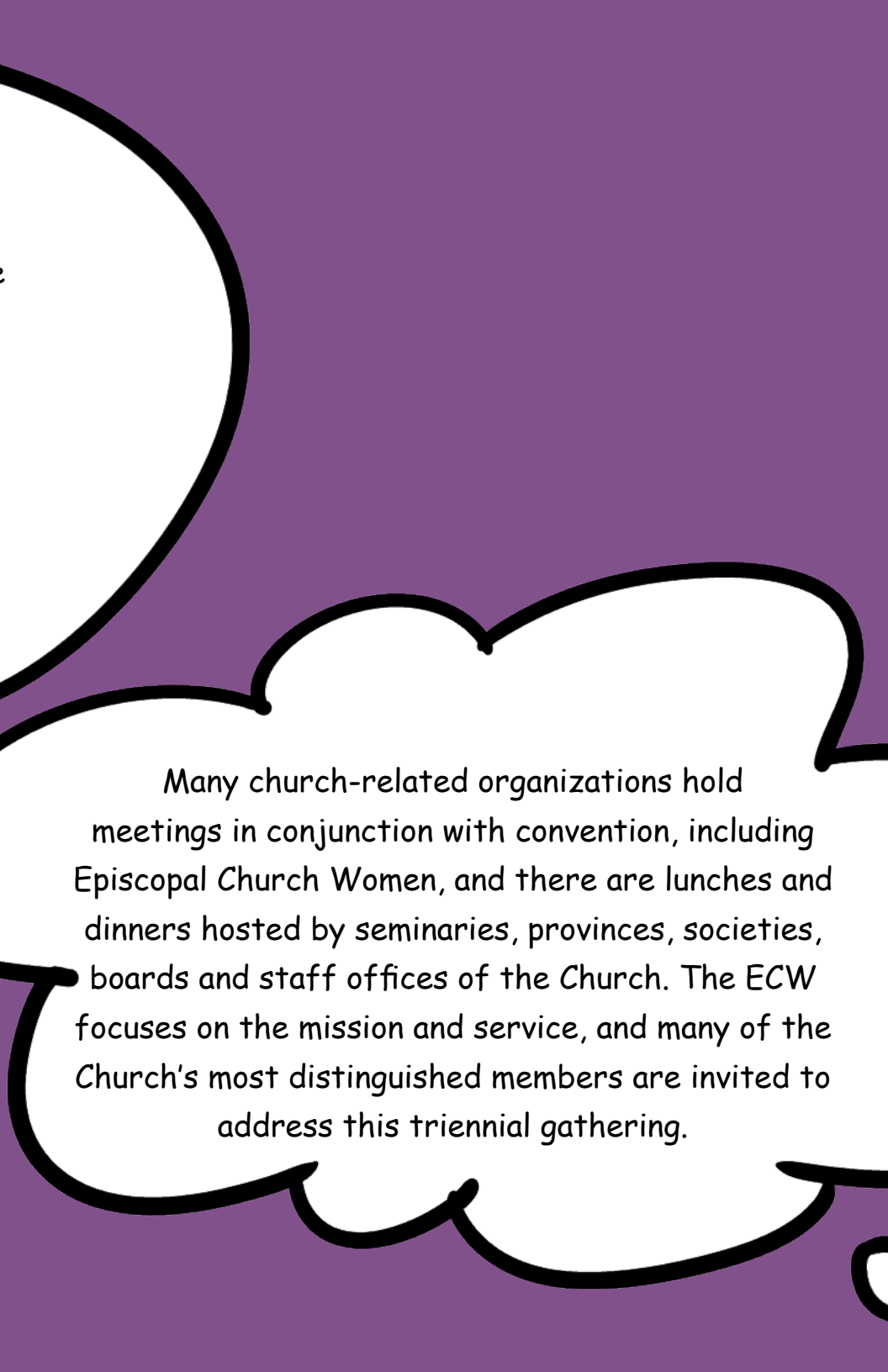
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**ALSO
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One of the most interesting parts of convention is the Exhibits Hall, a marketplace of goods and ideas where organizations and interest groups within the Church present their wares, recruit members or provide a respite from each busy day.

A purple background with a large white speech bubble containing text. The speech bubble has a thick black outline and is positioned in the lower half of the frame. The text inside is centered and reads: "Many church-related organizations hold meetings in conjunction with convention, including Episcopal Church Women, and there are lunches and dinners hosted by seminaries, provinces, societies, boards and staff offices of the Church. The ECW focuses on the mission and service, and many of the Church's most distinguished members are invited to address this triennial gathering." The text is in a black, sans-serif font.

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con-vene: /kən-veen

from Latin: *convenir* -
to come together, to agree, or suit

"General Convention is a combination of legislative assembly, bazaar of goods and services and family reunion. It is one of the most exciting and, truth be told, one of the most awe-inspiring gatherings in the world." **The Reverend Dr. Gregory S. Straub**, executive officer and secretary of General Convention.