

Rector's Column

*"I will instruct you and teach you the way you should go;
I will counsel you with my eye upon you."*
Psalm 32:8

Dear Friends,

Through the work of General Convention, the church has authorized a wide range of liturgical resources for use in worship. Over the years, the Convention has passed several resolutions directing the creation of revised and new services that use inclusive language as well as expansive images of God that reflect and express the inclusive nature of our policy and practice. We are a diverse church with an international, global reach and membership.



For example, General Convention #79 held in Austin adopted a resolution that allows all congregations in the Episcopal Church to use optional, expansive-language versions of the Rite II Eucharistic prayers in the 1979 Book of Common Prayer. We have been using these versions at Trinity since their adoption in 2018.

At General Convention #80 held in Baltimore in 2022, Resolution A058 directed the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music to provide oversight and maintenance dedicated to providing our expanding resources. This website was conceived of and built by the Task Force on Liturgical and Prayer Book Revision. The existing liturgy page of the website can be found here: <https://www.episcopalcommonprayer.org/existing-liturgies1.html>

The 80th Convention instructed the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music to examine liturgical materials in regards to colonialist, racist, white supremacist, imperialist, and nationalistic language and to develop proposals for amending the texts. The same Convention also adopted *The Guidelines for Expansive and Inclusive Language* (directed by the previous Convention) as working principles for the development of liturgical materials, directing the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music to follow these guidelines, and commended them to all persons who write or speak on behalf of The Episcopal Church. The Guidelines for Expansive and Inclusive Language were in the reports to the 80th General Convention of the Task Force on Liturgical and Prayer Book Revision and the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music.

The Guidelines introduce the importance and distinction in the use of expansive language, inclusive language, and metaphorical language in developing liturgy and hymnody for worship. The work of both the task force and the standing commission sought to maximize rather than erase language from our liturgical lexicon. "Language matters," states the report, "It shapes our sense of reality, and through language we forge and maintain our relationships with God and one another." This is to say that expansive Language is not intended to displace traditional language for God, but rather uses additional metaphors as a means to understand God in a more faithful way that includes rather than excludes people. A PDF document of the full report can be viewed and downloaded here: <https://extranet.generalconvention.org/staff/files/download/29991> The 31-page report provides the background of both theology and practice of Episcopal faith, and I recommend it to you for an understanding of the breadth of our faith tradition and commitment to worship that inspires every generation and people.

In Christ's Peace,
Pastor Rachel+