

R21-1

Appointment of Members of the Commission on LGBTQ+ Ministry

Resolved, that the 115th Annual Council of the Diocese of Atlanta, meeting virtually on November 12-13, 2021, acknowledge the appropriateness for diocesan commissions, committees, and boards to be representative of the geographic diversity of the Diocese of Atlanta; And be it further

Resolved that the Commission on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning+ (LGBTQ+) Ministry of the Diocese of Atlanta currently lacks such geographic diversity; And be it further

Resolved that the issues and concerns of the LGBTQ+ communities exist throughout the entire diocese and not just in any single particular geographic area; And be it further

Resolved that The Episcopal Church, through various canons and resolutions over many decades, has declared that LGBTQ+ persons shall not be discriminated against because of their sexual orientation, gender or gender expression/identity; And be it further

Resolved that full inclusion of and prevention of discrimination against LGBTQ+ persons, is best achieved through the engagement of as many members of our diocese as possible; And be it further

Resolved that the deans of each of the convocations of the Diocese of Atlanta, shall appoint one person from their respective convocations to serve on the Commission on LGBTQ+ Ministry for a term of three (3) years. Appointees may be appointed to serve up to two (2) consecutive terms. The chair and secretary of the Commission shall not be counted among the appointees by the deans.

Bruce Garner

Lay Delegate, All Saints' Atlanta

Explanation:

The Commission on LGBTQ+ Ministry of the diocese has been in existence for over five years, having been created from the work of task force by the same name. Through out that time, most of those serving on it have come from the metropolitan Atlanta area. Issues impacting LGBTQ+ members of our church and our society exist in every parish/worshiping community of the diocese as well as in every geographic area of the diocese.

Smaller urban areas and rural areas of the diocese present different challenges to the LGBTQ+ persons who live in them. The potential negative impact for being “out” and open about their authentic selves increases for those living in smaller urban and rural areas. This is particularly true for those who identify as transgender, who statistically suffer a greater chance of physical violence being committed against them.

Our church has resources for all who identify as minorities, including sexual minorities. Insuring those who need our resources involves making sure that they know of the existence of those resources. Increasing the geographic diversity of the members of the Commission on LGBTQ+ Ministry helps achieve that goal.