

## Resolution 2008-05 “Consent to Junction”

*Submitted by the Rt. Rev. Russell E. Jacobus, Bishop*

*After discussion with the Executive Council and the Standing Committee*

***Be it resolved***, by the 134<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention of the Diocese of Fond du Lac, with the mutual agreement of the 80<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention of the Diocese of Eau Claire and the approval of the Bishop of the Diocese of Fond du Lac, that a resolution asking for consent to junction the Diocese of Eau Claire and the Diocese of Fond du Lac be made to the 76<sup>th</sup> General Convention of the Episcopal Church meeting in 2009.

### Explanation

ARTICLE V of the Constitution of the National Church

Sec. 1. A new Diocese may be formed, with the consent of the General Convention and under such conditions as the General Convention shall prescribe by General Canon or Canons,... (2) by the junction of two or more Dioceses... The proceedings shall originate...by mutual agreement of the Conventions of the Dioceses concerned, with the approval of the Bishop of each Diocese....After consent of the General Convention, when a certified copy of the duly adopted Constitution of the new Diocese, including an unqualified accession to the Constitution and Canons of this Church, shall have been filed with the Secretary of the General Convention and approved by the Executive Council of this Church, such new Diocese shall thereupon be in union with the General Convention.

To junction, in the formal language of Episcopal Church Canons, means the coming together of dioceses to become a new diocese. There have been several conversations about junctioning with the dioceses of Wisconsin in the past, but these conversations never progressed very far.

Since the last Diocesan Convention, representatives of Fond du Lac and Eau Claire have met to discuss the possibility of the two dioceses junctioning. The conversations continue and the idea of coming together is both exciting and daunting at the same time. There would be many benefits as well as challenges. One criteria that comes up over and over again is that a decision to junction *should be made only if there are clear mission benefits*. To say it another way, junctioning should be about Mission and not maintenance.

Why talk about junctioning now? The Dioceses of Eau Claire and Fond du Lac have similar demographics and heritage. The Diocese of Eau Claire is currently without a Bishop while the Diocese of Fond du Lac has a Bishop with 15 years of experience as Bishop. Congregations in both dioceses face similar ministry challenges. The mission field outside the doors of congregations is the largest it has ever been and is growing.

What is the process to junction? There are basically three steps:

Step 1: Getting Permission: General Convention must give formal consent to forming of a new Diocese.

This happens after our Conventions mutually agree to ask for consent and the Bishop approves.

General Convention's consent does **NOT** form a new diocese, it is simply a step in the process. It's possible for consent to be given, but then nothing else happen.

Step 2: Getting Together: The dioceses have to get together and work out something new. Junctioning is **not** merging, but forming a new thing. There would be numerous meetings, listening sessions, etc... before adoption of a new Constitution and Canons.

Step 3: Getting Done: If the work is done and a new Constitution and Canons adopted by the two dioceses, then it is forwarded to the Executive Council of the Episcopal Church. Once they review and approve the document and it's filed with the Secretary of the General Convention, the junctioning would be complete and a new Diocese would be constituted.