



Diocese Releases Statement Regarding Disassociation from the Episcopal Church

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The Episcopal Church (TEC) has made an attack against our Bishop and Diocese, in the midst of efforts for a negotiated settlement, which has fundamentally changed our common life. You may have heard or read about this over the last week but it is vital today that we all understand what has occurred and what it means as clearly as possible.

For many years the diocese of South Carolina has opposed the primary theological direction of the national Episcopal Church (TEC). As TEC leadership has moved away from the claim of Jesus' uniqueness, the authority of Holy Scripture, the meaning of marriage and the nature of what it means to be human, we have had to be more steadfast in our defense of these truths, and more vocal and strong in our opposition to TEC's disavowal of them.

In the past few years this conflict has escalated to the point where in 2011 charges were brought against Bishop Lawrence (and later voted down in Committee), and where the 2012 General Convention placed an unbiblical doctrine of humanity into the Canons of the Church. The doctrine, discipline and worship of TEC were all fundamentally changed in a fashion most of our clergy cannot and will not comply with. Bishop Lawrence and a majority of our deputation left the Convention before it concluded as a result.

Ever mindful of protecting the Diocese and its parishes, its leadership had in place resolutions which would become effective upon any action by TEC. As a result of TEC's attack against our Bishop, the Diocese of South Carolina is disassociated from TEC; that is, its accession to the TEC Constitution and its membership in TEC have been withdrawn.

On Monday of this past week, the Bishop and the Diocese learned that the attack had taken place. The Diocese of South Carolina is no longer part of TEC as a result of TEC's actions. We will now have a special Diocesan Convention on November 17th to iron out the necessary changes to our Canons and Constitution, and begin to discern the best way forward into a new Anglican future. We are all now in the valley of decision, whether we have desired it or not. That reality was not within our control.

We are still the Diocese of South Carolina, holding the faith of the apostles which was handed down to us. This radical step was taken to protect our parishes and their gospel

witness. We believe that though the future has much that is unknown, the God who has faithfully led us by his grace to this point will take us where he wants us to go.

We encourage you to pray for the Bishop, Standing Committee, and diocese in a focused way between now and the special Convention. Please read the diocesan website, and the documents it provides, as carefully as possible. Because the situation is so unusual, we know there will be many questions. Please take them to your parish leaders and, if you wish, to members of the diocesan staff or Standing Committee so that we all may be as clear as we can about what has transpired.

To him who is able to do far more abundantly than all we can ask or imagine, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, be all glory now and forever. Amen.