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**ANGLICAN CHURCH
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March 20, 2026

The Rt. Reverend Charles Frances Edgar III, Bishop
The Reverend Mary Ellen Doran, President of the ADOSC Standing Committee
Anglican Diocese of South Carolina
P.O. Box 20127
Charleston, SC 29413

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Thank you for your correspondence dated February 20, 2026 regarding the administrative role of the Provincial Office in the recent Title IV proceedings in the case of Bishop Stewart Ruch III. We appreciate and honor the Diocese of South Carolina's concern for the integrity and trustworthiness of our common life.

While we are saddened that you declined our offer to send a delegation from the Executive Committee to meet with Bishop Edgar and members of your Standing Committee, please be assured that the offer remains open. We would be glad to meet with you at any time to share our hearts and pray together. We would also be very happy for Bishop Edgar to attend our next regularly scheduled monthly meeting on Tuesday, April 21 at 3:30 pm ET.

In response to your requests for an investigation into the Provincial Office's actions during the Ruch proceedings, at the recommendation of the Subcommittee appointed in January to oversee this review, the Executive Committee has retained Lathrop GPM to conduct an independent procedural review. Lathrop is a national firm with deep expertise in conducting neutral, trustworthy investigations for religious and non-profit organizations.

The purposes of the review are to assess how the Provincial Office managed the disciplinary process, identify opportunities for improvement, and strengthen the Province's practices for future disciplinary matters. Lathrop will evaluate the administration of the disciplinary process from June 2021 through December 2025, covering the tenures of both Archbishop Foley Beach and Archbishop Steve Wood. It will focus on the following:

- The Provincial Office's administration of the disciplinary process from summer 2021 through December 2025;
- Its role in overseeing investigations related to allegations against Bishop Ruch;
- Its role in the preparation of Presentments;
- Its interactions with the Board of Inquiry and the Court for the Trial of a Bishop;
- Its communication, recordkeeping, contracting, cost management, and related operational decisions.

In addition to these broad areas of assessment, the review will specifically explore the circumstances surrounding the resignation of members from the original Provincial Response Team (PRT) in 2022, allegations that current Provincial staff members inappropriately shared secure case files with the Court in the spring of 2025, and will address concerns about other discrete delays and expenditures related to the administration of the investigative and disciplinary processes.

The review will not revisit the outcome of the trial, re-examine the merits of the charges, or assess the internal processes, deliberations, or rulings of the Court for the Trial of a Bishop or any other judicial or investigative body. The Executive Committee has approved the use of cash reserves to fund this review, allowing Diocesan pledges to remain focused on the ongoing ministry and mission of the ACNA.

The Executive Committee is unable to order the release of trial transcripts, video recordings, motions, and other court documents, as you requested. The Court for the Trial of a Bishop is an independent body elected directly by the Provincial Council and is not under the jurisdiction or direction of the Executive Committee. We suggest that these requests be made directly to the Court by contacting the Clerk of Court (clerkofcourt@acna.org).

Additionally, it may be helpful to clarify the respective roles of the various institutions of our Province within the polity established by our Constitution and Canons.

Under our polity, the Provincial Council, in which each diocese is equally represented, is primarily responsible for governing and ordering the life of the Church. This includes providing for the proper administration of the Province and the appointment of Provincial officers. (Const., Art. V and Art. VII; Canon I.1.1 and Canon I.1.5.) The Executive Committee represents the authority of the Council when the Council is not in session and serves as the Board of Directors of the Province. (Const., Art. VII.10; Canon I.1.4.) The Archbishop, who is elected by the College of Bishops, serves as chair of the Executive Committee and the Presiding Officer of the Church and of the Council. (Canon I.1.4 and I.1.5.)

The Provincial Office and its members thus are accountable to the Council as the ultimate governing body of the Church, to the Executive Committee as the representative of the authority of the Council and as the Church's Board of Directors, and to the Archbishop (or the Dean in his absence) as the chief executive of the Church.

Each diocese is represented in these oversight bodies. Diocesan Bishops participate in the election of the Archbishop, and Diocesan delegates to the Council participate in the general governance of the Church, including the election of Provincial officers and members of the Executive Committee. While each diocese is thus indirectly involved in the life and work of the Provincial Office through these collective organs of our polity, no single diocese is entrusted with a direct oversight role, just as the Province is not charged with direct oversight of the dioceses. We believe the mediation of diocesan participation in the oversight function through these collective bodies ensures that oversight is

conducted with a view to the broad interests of the Church at large rather than to the particular interests of any single constituency. A due respect for the wisdom of these arrangements, for the authority of our Constitution and Canons, and for the equal rights of each diocese leads us to respect the oversight function granted to the Archbishop, the Executive Committee, and the Council.

As mentioned above, the Executive Committee, with the active participation of both the Archbishop and the Dean of the Province, in his role as Interim Ecclesiastical Authority, has sought to fulfill its oversight responsibilities by commissioning an independent review of the administration of the *Ruch* proceedings. After much careful and prayerful consideration, all concluded that this independent third-party review is the appropriate means of ensuring institutional accountability and developing recommendations for future canonical or operational improvements. We have shared the contents of your letter with the Subcommittee overseeing this review so they are aware of your specific concerns. Members of the Post-Ruch Review Subcommittee are: Bishop Mark Engel (ADGL), Executive Committee members Rev. Canon Dr. Keith Allen (GAD) and Sarah Kwolek (ADOP), and lay leader Kellie Moy (DOMA).

As also mentioned above, the Court for the Trial of a Bishop is an independent body within the Province, the members of which are elected by the dioceses through their delegates to the Council. (Canon IV.5.2.2.) Neither the Archbishop, nor the Provincial Office, nor the Executive Committee has the canonical authority to oversee, police, or direct the Court in its proceedings, deliberations, decisions, protocols, or public statements. The Court necessarily relies on the Province for administrative support, such as contracting and paying for limited staff roles as needed (e.g., Clerk of Court, Court Reporter, etc.), hosting a website for court updates, and providing secure document storage. The current Provincial Office has worked closely with the Executive Committee to identify, define, and document these functions clearly and transparently in a way that respects the principle of an independent Court.

The independent review mentioned above will consider how well current and previous members of the Provincial Office upheld this principle of judicial independence in their dealings with the Court, and the Executive Committee will carefully consider any reforms the independent review may recommend.

We trust this clarifies the steps the Province is taking and the canonical structures that guide our work. We look forward to sharing the high-level findings of our review with the Provincial Council in due course.

Faithfully,
The Executive Committee
Anglican Church in North America