



Episcopal Forum of South Carolina

P.O. Box 1772 • Mt. Pleasant, SC 29465

www.episcopalforumofsc.org

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Date: November 9, 2010
To: The Province IV House of Bishops
From: The Episcopal Forum of South Carolina (EFSC)
Subject: Update on the situation in the Diocese of SC

The Episcopal Forum of South Carolina wishes to update the Province IV House of Bishops on the situation present in the Diocese of South Carolina.

Following the Fall 2010 meeting of the TEC House of Bishops, the Forum sent a letter on September 22, 2010, with related attachments, to each member of the House of Bishops and to the Executive Council of The Episcopal Church. The letter enumerated our observations, and our concerns, regarding the direction toward disassociation from TEC that has been pursued by the Bishop and the Diocese of South Carolina.

Since our September letter went out, the annual Convention of the Diocese, (first convened in March of this year), was reconvened October 15th, and passed, without amendment, all six resolutions proposed in September by the Diocese of South Carolina Standing Committee. [Copies of these resolutions are attached to this mailing.] The resolutions include the removal of *Episcopal* from the diocesan Charter, and canonical and constitutional elimination of accession to TEC Canons, with the exception of retaining minor applicability to the 2006/current Title IV provisions. The Charter amendment and the canonical changes took effect that day; the constitutional amendments received first reading approval that day, and will presumably be ratified at the 2011 Convention in February.

We, the EFSC, are greatly saddened by these actions, and remain very concerned about our Diocese and the loyal Episcopalians in the Diocese of South Carolina. We have watched our Diocese slide further and further away from TEC over recent years. And it appears to us that the actions of this diocesan Convention have triggered the final break, contingent on the constitutional ratifications early next year.

In addition to our concern about the resolutions, St. Andrews, Mt. Pleasant, formerly the largest parish in the Diocese, has not only left TEC, they have continued use of their parish properties, have apparently affiliated with the Anglican Church of North America, and are busy planting similar churches in two nearby communities. The Bishop, with the advice and consent of the Standing Committee of the Diocese of SC, only recently removed the former Rector and his associates from ordained ministry in the Episcopal Church.

Enthusiastically Episcopalian in South Carolina

The Forum's mission is primarily to promote The Episcopal Church, its vision and polity, within the Diocese. To that end, we are planning to sponsor a conference in the Spring of 2011, which will include renowned speakers who will celebrate the work and mission of the Episcopal Church, as we have done before.

Another immediate task is to offer support to loyal Episcopalians, who live throughout our Diocese, by helping them to establish small groups in their homes where retired (or active) clergy would be invited to assist in worship and in pastoral care. These Episcopalians are hurting; they are concerned about their children's Christian Education, as well as their own. They are frequently shunned in their own parishes, and they have no viable options where they live. Based on the clergy and lay voting patterns at the Convention last month, it appears that only a handful of parishes remain loyal to TEC. Those few parishes are localized in three general geographic areas, leaving much of the diocese without Episcopal worship options.

The purpose of this letter is to bring you, as Bishops of our Province, up to date on our situation, to assure you of our prayers for your important ministry, and to ask you for your support and guidance. Thank you.

[Attachment](#)