



THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF FORT WORTH

The Rt. Rev. Ryan S. Reed, Bishop

For immediate release:

Mediation resolves dispute over attorneys' fees and costs

With encouragement from the 141st District Court, the Diocese entered into mediation with The Episcopal Church (TEC) in early June to settle claims of the Diocese for attorneys' fees and costs resulting from the property suit brought against it in 2009. All appeals in the suit were exhausted in February 2021 when the U.S. Supreme Court denied review of the unanimous May 2020 opinion issued by the Texas Supreme Court in favor of the Diocese.

In mediation, TEC agreed to pay the Diocese \$4.5 million for its legal fees and expenses. Payment was received today, and an embargo on public disclosure of the settlement has been lifted. The proceeds will allow the Diocese to settle certain deferred expenses and to return to investing in ministry and the growth of God's Kingdom. Parishes that were legally constrained by plaintiffs' (TEC's) objections from undertaking new construction are finally free to resume these projects.

"The Diocese made every attempt to avoid this litigation, beginning before its dissociation from TEC in 2008," Bishop Ryan Reed noted. "Unfortunately, negotiations ended abruptly after three church properties were released to TEC-majority congregations when the Presiding Bishop and local TEC leaders brought suit in April 2009, foreclosing on the possibility of any other settlement.

"As we put more than a decade of litigation behind us, we can once again devote ourselves to sharing the transforming love of Jesus Christ and our mission to equip the saints for the work of ministry. We look forward now in hope and trust for Christ's leading."

Still pending in federal and county courts are several satellite suits brought by the original plaintiffs. Placed on hold in deference to the main suit, it is hoped that these can be resolved in the near future.

The Episcopal Diocese of Fort Worth is a constituent member of the Anglican Communion with 55 congregations located in Fort Worth, Dallas, Austin, Midland, Wichita Falls, and other locations in Texas and Louisiana. It was founded in 1982.

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Contact: Suzanne Gill, Director of Communications
The Episcopal Diocese of Fort Worth
2900 Alameda Street, Fort Worth, Texas 76108
817.244.2885 • sgill@fwepiscopal.org
www.fwepiscopal.org