



The Episcopal Diocese of Fort Worth • *As We Realign*

Our 26th annual convention has taken action to secure our future as a diocese.

During the Nov. 14 & 15 diocesan convention, your clergy and elected delegates have taken a stand as faithful members of the worldwide Anglican Communion. They have heeded the call to “contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints.” (Jude 3)

What has changed?

By voting to change our diocesan Constitution and Canons, we have withdrawn from the General Convention, dissociating ourselves from the moral, theological, and disciplinary innovations of The Episcopal Church. We have realigned with another Province of the Anglican Communion. This is a change in affiliation, not a change in worship or doctrine.

Our Bishop, clergy, and congregations have been received into the fellowship of the Anglican Province of the Southern Cone. We are deeply grateful to Archbishop Gregory Venables for this provision, which he has made on a temporary and emergency basis, in response to the crisis in The Episcopal Church. We now look forward to the formation of an Anglican Province in North America.

Where we stand.

We remain true to the historic faith and order of the Church.

We remain a member diocese of the Anglican Communion.

We remain the Episcopal Diocese of Fort Worth. The word “episcopal” identifies us as part of the apostolic succession, with a bishop as our elected chief pastor.

We remain in communion with other Episcopalians. We share fellowship with all those in any Province who recognize the authority of Scripture and the faith and order of historic Anglicanism.

Everyone is welcome to worship in our churches this Sunday and every Sunday. Our liturgy remains the same, our name is the same. Most of all, we remain committed to the Gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

What is the status of our clergy?

Our clergy continue to be licensed for ministry by Bishop Iker. TEC benefit programs, which may no longer be available to them, have been replaced by new group insurance policies and a retirement plan. Clergy who have established pension accounts in TEC will be eligible at retirement to receive benefits earned. While these will be less than they might have had by staying with the program longer, their new investment plan will provide supplemental retirement funds.

What about those Episcopalians who disagree with the decision to realign?

We know that not everyone agrees with this change. Those who dissent are valued brothers and sisters in Christ, and they are welcome to remain in their congregations. For some, however, it may be necessary to separate from the diocese, perhaps permanently. In a few cases, it may be the will of a majority of the members in a particular parish to remain in The Episcopal Church. Where this is the case, the Bishop, Standing Committee, and Board of Trustees hope to work with the rector and vestry to come to a mutually agreeable separation and settlement of property issues without resort to lawsuits or other hostile actions.

What response should we expect from representatives of the General Convention?

We expect a number of announcements in the days, weeks, and months ahead. Among these may be plans for a new General Convention-member diocese in this 24-county area. There may be lawsuits testing the ownership of our properties. And action may be taken to remove our Bishop and clergy from their positions in ministry in the General Convention church. But such action will have no practical effect, since they will already be ministering under the authority of another Anglican Province. These developments may generate news headlines, and they may cause some confusion, but they will not prevent us from going forward in mission as a diocese.

What next?

On Nov. 24, Bishop Iker will meet with the clergy on the topic of “Moving Forward – Life After TEC.” Other events for clergy and lay people will be announced in the weeks ahead. Please continue to pray for our diocese, for all Episcopalians, and for the Church throughout the world. Let us pray for God’s guidance for ourselves and for the leadership of our churches and diocese. Let us seek the peace that passes understanding. Let us rejoice in God’s saving grace and continue to carry his message of love and salvation to the world.



The actions of our 26th diocesan convention assure us of our future as traditional Anglicans. We are now free to carry out our diocesan mission, “To equip the saints for the work of ministry.”