



St. Philip's Church
Est. 1680
142 Church Street
Charleston, South Carolina 29401

January 4, 2013

Dear Members of the Congregation:

By the time you receive this letter, you will have undoubtedly heard or read that St. Philip's Church, along with the Diocese of South Carolina and many other parish churches within the Diocese, have filed an action against the national Episcopal Church (TEC) in the Court of Common Pleas for Dorchester County, SC.

This action seeks to protect the real, personal and intellectual property of St. Philip's Church, the Diocese and the other parishes by asking the court to declare that TEC has no legal or equitable interest in these properties. It also asks the court to stop TEC from using our names and symbols.

The decision by the Vestry to join this suit was not made lightly—it was made only after much prayer and discussion, and after consultation with legal counsel. We are well aware that the Bible encourages us to attempt to resolve our disputes with fellow Christians, and in this regard, Bishop Mark Lawrence, with the assistance of the Bishop of the Upper Diocese of South Carolina and their counsel, attempted to mediate the differences that exist between TEC and the Diocese of South Carolina. It was in the midst of these good faith negotiations that Bishop Lawrence was informed of TEC's actions against him. Those actions triggered an automatic disassociation by the Diocese from TEC and the calling of a Special Convention.

In every other case in which a Diocese or parish church has attempted to leave the Episcopal Church, TEC has filed suit against the breakaway parishes and Dioceses, and then very aggressively prosecuted those suits at huge costs to TEC and to those Dioceses and parish churches electing to leave TEC. We, and our counsel, are of the belief that litigation with TEC was inevitable—it was not a question of whether but when TEC would bring suit against us. Their public statements since we left TEC have confirmed this belief. For this reason, the Vestry of St. Philip's, with a heavy heart, made the very difficult decision to join in this lawsuit.

As with any litigation, the outcome is not certain, but we believe that the law and the facts are on our side, and most importantly, we believe, after considerable thought and prayer, that what we are doing is in the best interests of St. Philip's Church. Meanwhile, the work of this Parish will continue—we will continue to spread the Good News of Jesus Christ in Word and Deed to a needy world.

We will allocate time at the upcoming Special Meeting on January 13, 2013 to answer any questions or concerns that you may have regarding this litigation. Meanwhile, if you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact Haden or any member of the Vestry.

J. Haden McCormick, Rector

Myron Harrington, Senior Warden

David Grubbs, Junior Warden