

December 5, 2011

The Right Reverend Mark Lawrence
The Episcopal Diocese of South Carolina
126 Coming Street
Charleston, South Carolina 29413

Dear Mark,

I write to you following the regular annual meeting of the bishops of Province 4, gathered this year in Memphis, Tennessee. We missed you and understood your need to stay at home and close to your diocese.

The meeting covered a variety of topics: the Denominational Health Plan; the beginning of a search process for a new dean of the School of Theology at Sewanee; the upcoming Provincial Synod in June and the General Convention in July; ministry to retired clergy and their families; Daughters of the King; a prison ministry network in our province; ongoing concerns about the sin of racism in our world and church; and immigration, among other topics.

We also considered, with some concern, recent publicly reported actions regarding quitclaim deeds given to parishes in the Diocese of South Carolina. Since we have had no direct communication from you regarding these reported actions, we determined that it is our duty as bishops of this province to address these concerns in direct communication with you, as Jesus exhorts his followers in Matthew's Gospel (18:15-20), and in accord with our ordination vows regarding the unity and governance of the church. What we seek in the coming weeks is a face-to-face meeting with you and a representative group of your fellow Bishops Diocesan of Province 4 in order to have a clarifying conversation and to address the concerns raised among us:

A. We have heard and read reports that you have given a quitclaim deed to each congregation in your diocese. Is this true? If this report is true, under what canonical authority did you proceed? Did you involve the Standing Committee and are the members of the Standing Committee in accord? Who signed the deeds? Would you provide a sample copy of a deed and the letter of explanation that accompanied it?

B. In order to better understand your action, the Bishops of Province 4 gathered in Memphis respectfully request that you meet with several of your fellow Provincial Bishops Diocesan in Charleston, or elsewhere if you desire, to discuss what has been noted above. We make this request in a spirit of collegiality and fellowship as well as out of concern for the people of the Diocese of South Carolina and concern for the well-being of The Episcopal Church.

I have contacted you earlier today by telephone and shared with you the content of this letter, as well as seeking a date in the very near future for our proposed meeting. I will send you an email and hard copy of the letter. I am also releasing this letter to Episcopal news organizations today after our conversation.

Faithfully yours,

Dan

Clifton Daniel, 3rd
Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of East Carolina
Vice President of Province 4 of The Episcopal Church