

"I am enthusiastically Christian, less enthusiastically Episcopalian" - The Very Rev. Dr. Peter C. Moore

SOUTH CAROLINA: Former Trinity Seminary Dean Blasts Episcopal Church Leadership

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A former dean of one of The Episcopal Church's eleven seminaries, committed evangelical, author and Episcopal priest for nearly half a century, says that a recent attempt to drive a wedge between orthodox and liberal Episcopalians in the Diocese of South Carolina avoids the truth about the Episcopal Church.

The Very Rev. Dr. Peter C. Moore, now theologian-in-residence at St. Michael's Episcopal Church in Charleston, South Carolina, said a recent full-page ad [\[available here\]](#) in the Post and Courier newspaper, by a group calling themselves The Episcopal Forum of S.C., left him "unpersuaded" by their arguments. He also stated that theological and moral innovations by Episcopal Church leaders across the country are forcing Episcopalians to find spiritual shelter in new Anglican jurisdictions.

"In its description of 'I am an Episcopalian' the forum touches on many issues with which I have great sympathy: the dignity of every person, our ancient liturgy, women's ordination, lay involvement and the world-wide body of 70 million members of which we are a part.

"What it does not say as clearly as it ought is that this worldwide body, the Anglican Communion, is profoundly upset with the current activities of the Episcopal Church, to the point that a majority of its Primates (chief bishops in each international province) consider themselves in broken communion with it, and increasingly are officially recognizing the newly-formed Anglican Church of North America as a more authentic representative of true Anglicanism in this continent.

"Why?

- * Leading bishops and theologians of the Episcopal Church, including the presiding bishop, will not affirm Jesus Christ as the unique Son of God and the only way to salvation.
- * While the Bible is mined for interesting theological ideas, TEC is unwilling to submit to the clear teaching of Scripture on many issues, including those of marriage and sexuality.
- * TEC has consistently sided in its affirmations with the pro-abortion forces within government and society.
- * Far from honoring differences, as the forum says, TEC is involved in more than 60 lawsuits against its own churches and dioceses whom it considers unEpiscopalian because they cannot follow present leadership of TEC because of its lack of adherence to traditional Christian beliefs.
- * TEC's presiding bishop has consistently assumed powers that are uncanonical, and thereby unlawful under TEC's own laws and constitution, and freely removes bishops and clergy who openly differ with her.
- * In flagrant refusal to submit to worldwide Christian opinion, it has ordained a noncelibate homosexual as a bishop and is poised to ordain others as bishops who similarly live in

relationships that disregard the biblical norm for sexuality.

* TEC's House of Bishops will not discipline fellow members who widely disseminate outrageously unChristian views with impunity.

"I believe that the vast majority of Episcopalians in the Diocese of South Carolina question the forum's understanding of the Faith and Order to which we all have pledged allegiance.

"Rather, we stand firmly and lovingly with our bishop [Mark Lawrence] and those clergy and laity who carry on effective ministries in Christ's name throughout this Diocese."

A legal battle between the Diocese of South Carolina and the Episcopal Church will loom closer if a series of resolutions are passed at the diocese's annual convention March 26. Three of five resolutions seek to tighten control over the diocese by the diocesan bishop and urge the Presiding Bishop to drop legal counsel.

If passed, the 219th Convention of the Diocese of South Carolina will affirm its legal and ecclesiastical authority as a sovereign diocese within the Episcopal Church, will declare the Presiding Bishop has no authority to retain attorneys in this Diocese that present themselves as the legal counsel for the Episcopal Church in South Carolina, and will demand that the Presiding Bishop drop the retainer of all such legal counsel in South Carolina who have been obtained contrary to the express will of this Diocese.

The Diocese of South Carolina had scheduled its convention for March 4-5, but Lawrence wrote to the diocese in early February saying that the convention would be delayed until March 26 in order for him, the diocesan Standing Committee and the diocese "to adequately consider a response" to what he called an "unjust intrusion into the spiritual and jurisdictional affairs of this sovereign diocese of the Episcopal Church."

Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori told the church's Executive Council on Feb. 19 that Lawrence had attributed the delay "supposedly to my incursions in South Carolina."

Anticipating that Lawrence might be inhibited and deposed, an addition was made to Canon XXXVII saying that the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese is the Bishop. "If there is no Bishop, the Standing Committee is the Ecclesiastical Authority."

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