

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – PRESS RELEASE # 4**

**January 17, 2004**

**EPISCOPAL FORUM OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

**Joint from:**

[Albany Via Media](#)  
[Concerned Episcopalians of the St. Lawrence Deanery](#)  
Episcopal Forum of South Carolina  
[Episcopal Voices of Central Florida](#)  
[Fort Worth Via Media](#)  
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Concerned Episcopalian in the Diocese of Florida

**Groups Praise the Strong Leadership of Bishop of West Tennessee**

Bishop Don Johnson of West Tennessee has acted with laudable promptness and firmness in responding to the disclosure of the confidential plans of the American Anglican Council (AAC) to dismantle the Episcopal Church, U.S.A. Bishop Johnson did not vote in favor of consecrating Bishop Gene Robinson (the first openly homosexual bishop in the Episcopal Church), and he has been a conservative voice working within the church and encouraging others to do likewise.

But Bishop Johnson knows disloyalty when he sees it. The recent publication by the Washington Post of the letter from the Reverend Geoff Chapman, a member of the AAC "Committee on Adequate Episcopal Oversight," provided evidence of a secret agenda that the Bishop could not ignore. He has called on all within his diocese to disassociate themselves from an organization that he says intends "to methodically create anarchy in the Church" and "to destroy The Episcopal Church as it currently exists." As expected, supporters of the AAC have attacked Bishop Johnson for his actions, but we urge him to stay the course. We applaud Bishop Johnson's courageous stance and hope that other Bishops will take similar stands in their own dioceses.

**Attachments: The following letters are attached as references to sources only:**

- **[Episcopal Dissenters Plan Their Strategy](#)**  
Many Traditionalists Prefer Not to Flee  
*By Alan Cooperman*  
Washington Post Staff Writer  
Sunday, January 11, 2004; Page A03
- **[Confidential Letter dated 12/28/03 by Geoff Chapman, Rector of St Stephens Church in Sewickley, Pa. \(Diocese of Pittsburgh\) on behalf of the American Anglican Communion](#)** (PDF file).

- **A Pastoral Letter from Bishop Don Johnson of the Diocese of West TN** – as reported in the press Thursday, January 15, 2004
- **A Pastoral Letter from Bishop John W. Howe, Episcopal Bishop of Central Florida** - as reported in the press Thursday, January 15, 2004

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