



THE DIOCESE OF SOUTH CAROLINA

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN SOUTH CAROLINA

STANDING COMMITTEE

August 18, 2021

To the faithful people of the Diocese of South Carolina,

Greetings. We write to you with an important update regarding the ordination service for our bishop-elect being planned for October 2nd.

As you are likely aware, there is growing concern over the daily increasing number of cases of coronavirus infections in South Carolina. Based on conversations we have had with medical experts, and in keeping with our desire to follow our recently published guidelines, we have made the decision to scale back the events of the ordination weekend. Bishop-elect Ruth was involved in the discussions that led to the change in plans, and it is with her full support that we share this update.

We had been planning for a celebratory reception for Friday, October 1st, at Festival Hall in Charleston. This event was intended to be open to as many attendees as possible. But we have paused planning for the event. The hope - and expectation - is that we will be able to gather in the not-too-distant future for a grand celebration, but for the moment, we believe that the best course of action is to forego the October 1st reception.

For the ordination itself, it will be a full liturgical celebration, but we believe it is necessary to limit the planned attendance for the health and safety of all. We will be asking for all participants to wear face coverings, and we are planning to arrange seating at Grace Church Cathedral to accommodate social distancing between groups of attendees. The service will be live-streamed on the day, and we encourage those who cannot attend in person to tune in. More details about tickets to attend the service and congregational involvement will be shared in due course. We are also planning for a light, “walk through” reception following the service.

While we realize that many of you will be disappointed by this announcement, we want to be clear that the measures being taken should in no way diminish the joy of the occasion. God willing, on October 2nd, beginning at 11am at Grace Church Cathedral, Bishop-elect Ruth will be ordained as the XV Bishop of South Carolina. We have long awaited this moment, and we believe that the people of this diocese will greet it with a joy undimmed by any external circumstance.

Soon you will hear more about these decisions directly from Bishop-elect Ruth. We greatly appreciate her care and concern for everyone in the diocese and her readiness to change plans in response to the ongoing pandemic.

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As we approach the ordination date of October 2nd, we ask everyone in the diocese to remain faithful in their prayers and to continue showing love for each other. We particularly ask that you remember Bishop-elect Ruth and her family in your prayers.

We remain grateful to everyone in the diocese for walking together on this journey, and we remain confident that the joy of the resurrection is guiding us every step of the way.

Faithfully,

The Reverend Rob Donehue (on behalf of the Standing Committee)
President of the Standing Committee