



ANGLICAN CHURCH
IN NORTH AMERICA

A Pastoral Letter from the Archbishop

Addressing the Inhibition of Bishop Derek Jones and the Status of the Special Jurisdiction of the Armed Forces and Chaplaincy (SJAFC)

September 23, 2025

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

In recent days, the Anglican Church in North America has been faced with a difficult and sobering development concerning its Special Jurisdiction of the Armed Forces and Chaplaincy (SJAFC). I want to take a moment to share some details about this situation and address some of our chaplains' most pressing concerns.

This summer, the Office of the Archbishop received credible complaints regarding Bishop Derek Jones, alleging abuse of ecclesiastical power. These complaints did not involve physical or sexual misconduct, nor did they involve any doctrinal concerns. Nevertheless, they were concerning because abuse of ecclesiastical power violates the trust that is essential for effective ministry.

After prayerful discernment, and in accordance with Title IV of our canons, on September 12, Bishop Ray Sutton, Dean of the Province and Presiding Bishop of the REC, and I met with Bishop Jones to issue a Godly Admonition. This directive required Bishop Jones and his subordinates to cooperate with a formal investigation to determine if any of the complaints against him rose to the level of a presentable offense, a step that is in accordance with the standard disciplinary procedures outlined in Title IV of the ACNA Constitution and Canons. Regrettably, Bishop Jones refused to comply with this directive. On September 21, I issued a temporary inhibition to Bishop Jones that restricted him from ministry for sixty days.

The following day, September 22, the Executive Committee of the Jurisdiction of the Armed Forces and Chaplaincy (JFAC) sent a letter to the Archbishop announcing its withdrawal from the Province. While this action is deeply disappointing and particularly unsettling for our chaplains, **I want to be clear: the Special Jurisdiction itself remains a canonical ministry of the Anglican Church in North America that was created and is sustained by our [canons](#).** The JFAC has purportedly withdrawn from the ACNA under Article II.3 of the Constitution, which pertains to dioceses or groups of dioceses organized into distinct jurisdictions. However, because the Special Jurisdiction is not a diocese, but a canonical ministry established under Title 1, Canon 11, it does not have canonical authority to withdraw from the Province. The Special Jurisdiction, under which

the chaplains serve, continues to exist within the ACNA regardless of Bishop Jones's withdrawal or the withdrawal of any entities under his control.

In response to this unfortunate action, yesterday, I convened the College of Bishops to take the initial steps needed to ensure necessary protections are in place for our ACNA chaplains. I have appointed Archbishop Emeritus Bob Duncan and Bishop Jay Cayangyang to provide episcopal and pastoral oversight for the chaplains of the SJAFM until a new bishop is elected. Additionally, I have communicated with the U.S. Department of War Office of Chaplaincy Services to make all necessary notifications to ensure our chaplains' endorsements remain valid and uninterrupted during this period of transition.

In the midst of this transition, I want to particularly emphasize three things:

1. **Our ACNA chaplains remain called and sent.** Chaplains ordained in the ACNA retain their orders and endorsements unless they choose otherwise. Their ministry—in military units, hospitals, prisons, and workplaces—continues to bring the presence of Christ into places where it is most needed.
2. **We are committed to supporting our Chaplains.** We are committed to praying for, guiding, and pastorally supporting every chaplain during this season and to ensure they maintain their endorsements and positions in their various military departments or other government agencies. The Province will work diligently to ensure this ministry is protected and strengthened.
3. **Accountability Matters.** I am deeply disappointed and saddened that Bishop Jones has chosen to respond in the fashion he has to our province's effort to investigate credible complaints of misconduct. Discipline, rooted in the same word as "discipleship", is one of God's gifts to the Church to safeguard integrity and restore right order, and it is the shared responsibility of the whole church to ensure that all clergy and lay leaders exercise their calling in a way that protects the people under their care.

In the midst of these disruptive events, I encourage you to remember that Christ is Lord of His Church. Even in moments of difficulty, He is present with us, guiding us into truth and sustaining us with His Spirit.

Please join me in praying this Prayer For Guidance from our Book of Common Prayer:

Go before us, O Lord, in all our doings with your most gracious favor, and further us with your continual help; that in all our works begun, continued, and ended in you, we may glorify your holy Name, and finally, through your mercy, obtain everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

In the peace and hope of Christ Jesus,



Archbishop, Anglican Church in North America

To receive updates and information about this evolving situation, please visit the updates page on our website [here](#). For Chaplains who would like to be updated on any developments, sign up for Provincial emails [here](#).