

Oct 28, 2025

Dear Friends in Christ,

The past few days have been a difficult time for many of our clergy and parishioners, and a challenging time for our church.

I know some of you, understandably, have questions about how the ACNA receives and addresses allegations of misconduct. I want to assure you that we are always saddened by and take seriously every accusation of misconduct by any bishop, priest, deacon, lay leader, or volunteer serving within the ACNA. As Executive Director of the Province, I want to provide clarity about our processes and direct you to additional resources that explain them in greater detail.

Our Church's disciplinary procedures are governed by Title IV of our Constitution and Canons. This section of our canons outlines how matters of misconduct are received, reviewed, investigated, and, when necessary, adjudicated to uphold justice and accountability throughout the Province. Sadly, while no religious denomination is entirely free from episodes of misconduct, it is indispensable to have established canonical procedures in place to address these painful instances when they occur. You may review our current Constitution and Canons [here](#).

The province and all of our dioceses have clear channels for receiving complaints of misconduct against any bishop, priest, deacon, lay leader, or volunteer serving in the Church. Visit the [ACNA's Safeguarding](#) page for detailed instructions about how to file a report of misconduct. All reports are kept in strict confidence. Here is a brief summary:

- All reports of misconduct are thoroughly reviewed, and, when necessary, reported to civil authorities.
- A complaint is then assessed to determine if it rises to the level of a presentment, which is a formal charge alleging a violation of canon (church) law.
- Sometimes, an initial complaint is directly submitted as a presentment.
- As soon as a complaint is validated as a presentment, a Board of Inquiry is appointed and convened to investigate the accusations and determine whether reasonable grounds exist to proceed to trial.

In the recent complaints concerning Archbishop Wood, the Archbishop has recused himself from any role in appointing the Board of Inquiry. In accordance with our canons, he has delegated that responsibility to Bishop Ray Sutton, who serves as Dean of the Province. Bishop Sutton is working as expeditiously as possible to ensure these reports are addressed with care.

Likewise, as is customary in any case of complaints against a Bishop, Archbishop Wood has been advised to seek his own counsel for any legal or communications needs relating to accusations against him. The ACNA Chancellor and staff remain in service of the province and are not working directly with Archbishop Wood on these matters. My staff and I seek to uphold the highest degree of integrity in this regard.

Because this process is still underway, it would be premature to speculate about potential outcomes. The Church's approach, in every circumstance, is guided by prayerful discernment, due process, and pastoral care for all involved.

For more information about the Church's disciplinary processes, including definitions of key terms and the specific steps that will be followed, please visit the Frequently Asked Questions section of our website [here](#).

If you have any additional reports, concerns, or evidence regarding the accusations against Archbishop Steve Wood or others, please submit these through misconduct@acna.org. This email is moderated by the Director of Safeguarding and Canonical Affairs, Dr. Tiffany Butler, and the Vice-Chancellor, Jeannie Rose Barksdale. A link is also available on the FAQ site noted above.

We ask for your continued prayers for all those carrying responsibility in this matter, for the accusers, the accused, and for the peace and unity of Christ's Church.

In Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Deborah Tepley".

Deborah Tepley, M.B.A.
Executive Director of the Province
Anglican Church in North America