

12 October 2022

Dear Bishop Howard, President Gibbes, and the Standing Committee of the Diocese of Florida,

We write to you at this time to express grave concern about the upcoming second election for Bishop Coadjutor for the Diocese of Florida, scheduled for November 19, 2022. We believe that this election is being rushed forward without systematically and thoroughly addressing some key issues that have become evident in the Diocese of Florida. We are concerned that this election will not be valid canonically, nor are the candidates being fairly and impartially presented by the Diocesan office. It is out of love and concern for the Diocese of Florida, for its unity and its mission, that we write this letter asking for postponement of the scheduled election on Nov 19, 2022.

There are eight main reasons why we believe that this election is unwise at this time.

1. The search profile created for the first election is outdated, no longer valid for this election, and the original is no longer available. Yet, a current and relevant search profile is called for in this process.
2. The call for an election of a bishop coadjutor began at the 178th Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Florida on Saturday, January 30, 2021. At that convention, Diocesan Resolution 2021-001 reads “that the ministry of the Bishop Coadjutor, as announced by Bishop Howard, will commence no later than November 5, 2022.” This date will have passed by the time of the second election.
3. The election of a bishop must be ‘orderly,’ and yet plans and details about this election are still being determined and the website updated.
4. The list of canonical residency for clergy is under development and appears not to have been maintained. A member of the Standing Committee has done a lot of work to clarify and clean things up, but many questions remain unanswered. Priests are appealing to the Bishop for canonical residency who have been refused in the past, and we are just over a month from the election. This process of clearly defining and examining each priest and deacon cannot be done in a matter of months and must be given time and patience to be done correctly.
5. The process of discernment of lay delegates is also under scrutiny and is not clear to all parishes, nor evenly applied. Again, the Standing Committee is sending out eblasts and trying to clean this up now, but it is too little too late.
6. Trust has eroded in the diocese. Previously and long-scheduled opportunities for dialogue and communion among diocesan clergy and laity have been shut down by the Diocesan leadership.
7. Candidates approached for nomination have refused due to the lack of stability of the electoral base and lack of fidelity to rules and procedure.

8. The diocese has now hired one of the candidates, and endorsed said candidate by placing that person on their payroll, and having that person systematically visit parishes, effectively campaigning.

We ask that you reconsider the timing of this election.

May God bless you.

Faithfully,

The Rev. Gee Alexander (Assoc. Priest, St. John's Cathedral)  
Clergy Delegate

The Rev. Wiley Ammons (Rector, Church of the Redeemer, Jacksonville)  
Clergy Delegate

Pam Jordan Anderson (St. John's, Tallahassee)  
Lay Delegate

Paul Anderson (St. John's Tallahassee)

Paul Arrington (Good Shepherd, Jacksonville)

Brian Arsenault (St. John's, Tallahassee)

Valerie Arsenault (St. John's, Tallahassee)

Deborah Harden Baker (St. John's Cathedral)

Tom Bateman (St. John's, Tallahassee)  
Lay Delegate

David Beal (St. Peter's, Fernandina Beach)

David Lee Beal (St. Peter's, Fernandina Beach)

Leigh Coulter Beal (St. Peter's, Fernandina Beach)

Joan Bearden (Holy Trinity, Gainesville)

The Rev. Wendy Billingslea (Chaplain, Christ Church Ponte Vedra)  
Clergy Delegate

Jay Bortz (Good Shepherd, Jacksonville)

Jacob F. Bryan, IV (Good Shepherd, Jacksonville)

Kristen Bryant (Holy Trinity, Gainesville)  
Lay Delegate

Felicia Bullock (St. John's Cathedral)

Barbara Cadwell (St. Peter's, Fernandina Beach)  
Lay Delegate

Susan Callender (Good Shepherd, Jacksonville)

The Very Rev. Kate Moorehead Carroll (Dean, St. John's Cathedral)  
Clergy Delegate

Margaret Cauthon (Holy Trinity, Gainesville)

Pennela Chapman (Redeemer, Jacksonville)

Dr. Carole Clifford (St. John's Cathedral)  
Lay Delegate

Jenny Cocanougher (Good Shepherd, Jacksonville)

Russell Collins (Good Shepherd, Jacksonville)

Rosie Connolly (Holy Trinity, Gainesville)  
Lay Delegate

Owene Courtney (St. John's Cathedral)

James R. Cox (St. John's Cathedral)

Martha Cox (St. John's Cathedral)

Jonathan Crews (Good Shepherd, Jacksonville)

The Rev. Irene Crocker (St. George, Jacksonville)  
Clergy Delegate

Susan Croom (Good Shepherd, Jacksonville)

Phillip W. Cushman, M.D. (Holy Trinity, Gainesville)

Gwen Willis Dickson (St. Peter's, Fernandina Beach)

Rachel DiSesa (Holy Trinity, Gainesville)

Dee Dugger (Holy Trinity, Gainesville)  
Lay Delegate

Leo Dugger (Holy Trinity, Gainesville)

Cathleen Dunkle (St. John's Cathedral)

The Very Rev. Kurt Dunkle (Retired Dean, General Seminary)  
Clergy Delegate

Gail R. Dunn (Good Shepherd, Jacksonville)

Peggy Ezell (Good Shepherd, Jacksonville)

Julian Earl Farris (Good Shepherd, Jacksonville)

Linda Ferrigno (St. John's Cathedral)

Gregory Gafford (Church of the Redeemer)

Kathaleen Gallagher (Holy Trinity, Gainesville)

Denise Watson Gilbreath (Good Shepherd, Jacksonville)

Anne Graham (Jr. Warden, Good Shepherd, Jacksonville)

Douglas Grant (Good Shepherd, Jacksonville)

Lenora Gregory (Church of Our Savior; Diocesan Council; General Convention Delegate)

The Rev. Robert S. Griffiths (Retired Clergy)  
Clergy Delegate

The Rev. Elyse M. Gustafson (Assisting Priest, Good Shepherd, Jacksonville)

Melody Hainline (St. John's Cathedral)

T. R. Hainline, (St. John's Cathedral)

Deborah Hardman (Christ Church, Ponte Vedra)  
Lay Delegate

Jack Hardman (Christ Church, Ponte Vedra)

The Rev. George Raymond Henderson, Jr. (Retired Clergy, Diocese of Florida)  
Clergy Delegate

Anthe Hoffman (Holy Trinity, Gainesville)

The Rev. Marsha Evans Holmes (Deacon, Christ Church, Ponte Vedra)  
Clergy Delegate

Carolyn Horter (Holy Trinity, Gainesville)

Brooke S. Kennerly (St. John's, Tallahassee)  
Lay Delegate

The Rev. David C. Killeen  
Clergy Delegate

Patrick Kimball (Vestry, St. John's Cathedral)

Simone King (St. Peter's, Fernandina Beach)  
Alternate Lay Delegate

Marcia Lamkin (San Jose, Jacksonville)

The Rev. Allen LaMontagne (Former SubDean, St. John's Cathedral)

Katie LeMaster (Christ Church, Ponte Vedra)

Charlotte Lewis (Good Shepherd, Jacksonville)

Lloyd Lewis, Sr. (Vestry member, St. John's Cathedral)

Naya Lyons-Khadpe (Good Shepherd, Jacksonville)

Monica MacKenzie (St. Paul's by-the-Sea, Jacksonville Beach)

Melody Marshall (Holy Trinity, Gainesville)

The Rev. Christopher S. Martin (Retired Clergy; St. George, Jacksonville)  
Clergy Delegate

The Rev. Nancee Martin  
Clergy Delegate

Sandy Martin (St. George, Jacksonville)

Virginia Maurer (Holy Trinity, Gainesville)

Hope McCharen (St. George, Jacksonville)

Lisa McKenna (Jr. Warden, St. John's Cathedral)

Rich McKenna (St. John's Cathedral)

David Michal (Good Shepherd, Jacksonville)

Christopher Mitchell (Good Shepherd, Jacksonville)

The Rev. J. Fletcher Montgomery (Rector, Holy Trinity, Gainesville)

Sarah Michaels Montgomery, Esq. (Holy Trinity, Gainesville; former Vice-Chancellor, Diocese of Upper South Carolina)

The Rev. Bob Morris (Retired Associate Rector, Christ Church Ponte Vedra)  
Clergy Delegate

Robert T. Mounts (Vestry member, Holy Trinity, Gainesville)

Elizabeth Olsen (Good Shepherd, Jacksonville)

Janet D. Owen (St. John's Cathedral)

The Rev. Ronald M. Owen (Retired Clergy)  
Clergy Delegate

The Rev. Brent Owens (Rector, Good Shepherd, Jacksonville)  
Clergy Delegate

Kathleen Pagan (Holy Trinity, Gainesville)

Brian Palmer (Good Shepherd, Jacksonville)

Barbara Pearce (Good Shepherd, Jacksonville)

Donnie Pearce (Good Shepherd, Jacksonville)

The Rev. Penny Pfab  
Clergy Delegate

James Pierce (St. Philip's, Jacksonville)  
General Convention Lay Deputy

Ann Pierson (Holy Trinity, Gainesville)  
Lay Delegate

Joe Porter (Good Shepherd, Jacksonville)  
Lay Delegate

Ann Powell (Holy Trinity, Gainesville)

Richard Powell (Vestry, Holy Trinity, Gainesville)  
Alternate Lay Delegate

Ann Pridgen (Good Shepherd, Jacksonville)

Janeal Quinnell

The Rev. Thomas Reeder, (Rector, Christ Church, Ponte Vedra Beach)  
Clergy Delegate

The Rev Jeff Reichmann (Retired, Good Shepherd, Jacksonville)  
Non-canonical

Jean Reid (Holy Trinity, Gainesville)

Robert Rout (Holy Trinity, Gainesville)

Susan Schantz (Christ Church Ponte Vedra)  
Lay Delegate

Anne E. Seraphine (Holy Trinity, Gainesville)

Art Shults (St. Mary's, Jacksonville)  
Lay Delegate

Frances Shults (St. Mary's, Jacksonville)

Heather Stiles (Church of the Mediator)

Annette A. Talbert (Church of Our Saviour, Jacksonville)

Penny Uitti (St. John's Cathedral)

Paul Van Brunt (Christ Church, Ponte Vedra)

Harvey Ward, Jr. (Holy Trinity, Gainesville)

Margie C. Watkins (St. John's Tallahassee)

Sarah White (St. James, Lake City)

Stephen Williams (Good Shepherd, Jacksonville)

Courtenay Wilson (Good Shepherd, Jacksonville)  
Lay Delegate

Matthew Wolfe (Good Shepherd, Jacksonville)

The Rev. Joe Woodfin (Rector, St. Peter's Fernandina Beach)  
Clergy Delegate

Shannon Zinn (Holy Trinity, Gainesville)