

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

We are writing in regard to a complaint submitted to you on October 12th by the group of individuals who objected to the election held on May 24, 2022. That election, with an election slate including four locally produced, and widely known and respected diocesan canons, saw Rev. Charles Holt of Texas prevail in the third ballot with a majority of clergy votes and a 70% majority of lay votes.

Procedural objections were made by a group, organized by Rev. Bob Griffiths, after the election. These objections were accepted by a national Court of Review, although the decision was on technical grounds (regarding the expansion of voting methods late in the process), and the Court of Review took care to say that there was no misconduct intended. In the first petition, the objectors complained after a result they did not like had occurred; this time, they seek to prevent the process altogether. The bottom line is that in both the first, and now second petition, a vocal minority are attempting to disenfranchise the vote of the majority.

This group, in their Facebook presence¹ and with national allies, have said that they do not wish for a moderate conservative bishop to be elected in our diocese, even though the Reverend Holt pledged to uphold the BCP and National Canons in all matters. In the aftermath of the election, loathsome and untrue allegations of racism were thrown about and then conclusively refuted, but the tone was set.

This group has openly discussed in social media that their desire is to stall any election until Bishop Howard leaves office next year, leaving the Diocese in a state of limbo and mandating an interim bishop of others' choosing.²

They also assert a state of mistrust and chaos in the Diocese of Florida, an assertion which we believe mischaracterizes the experience of most in the Diocese. Through a difficult schism 20 years ago, economic disruptions, pandemic and severe national attendance downturns, this diocese has opened churches and fostered world-class ministries in prisons, small towns and drug rehabilitation centers. Our ten-year attendance data compares favorably (-16%) with attendance in other domestic dioceses (-31%).³

While we, like many dioceses, are a big tent comprised of people with varying understandings of biblical interpretation, human sexuality and political viewpoints, we work together across difference in a variety of missions and ministries, valuing and supporting one another. There is no canonical reason the historic and lawful process for selecting a bishop coadjutor not apply in our diocese. The objecting group proposes to depart from this process in the hopes of thwarting the views of the majority of both orders, already expressed once.

¹ <https://www.facebook.com/groups/392599384091650>

² See Appendix 2, Bob Griffith's August 16th Facebook Post at <https://www.letfldecide.com/bobgriffithsstrategy>

³ <https://extranet.generalconvention.org/staff/files/download/30690>

Therefore, we, the undersigned, find the eight objections of the letter of October 12th to be without merit or substance.⁴ In specific, the objection to the employment of Rev. Holt in the diocese as unfair to the other candidates is perplexing. Our other candidates, the Rev. Canon Beth Tjoflat and the Rev. Canon Miguel Rosada are excellent, vocal and highly visible priests in this diocese. If anything, Rev. Holt's employment levels the playing field given the visibility of the other candidates. All of the candidates are now employed in the Diocese, and no candidate has objected to this.

Our desire is simple - we want the right to vote for our next bishop on November 19th, the date proposed by Bishop Howard and accepted by the Standing Committee. Further, we question the bona fides of many of the signatories in this petition. Many are retired, some no longer actually reside within this Diocese, and many are not scheduled delegates to the election.

The petitioners have created this situation of uncertainty of which they now claim to be the victims. This act of division is without precedence and brings discredit upon the Body of Christ and the Diocese of Florida. There can be only one solution: Let the people, lay and cleric, vote. Let the Holy Spirit come and decide. If they have objections to process, Robert's Rules of Order have ample provision for their expression. If they simply have questions, the Standing Committee are trying to answer them and working with the National Church for a transparent and fair election as outlined by canon.

Respectfully and faithfully, but with quiet and growing impatience, we implore you to hold our canonically called election on November 19, 2022 to protect our rights to have our votes counted.

We are Yours in Christ,

We urge our Standing Committee to follow through with our bishop's election as directed by our diocesan canons:

Clergy (alphabetically)

1. Rev. Curt Benham, Trinity Parish, St. Augustine
2. Rev. Monica Bosque, San Lucas, Jacksonville
3. Rev. Peter Corbin, Bethany, Hilliard
4. Rev. Richard Costin, St. Mary's, Green Cove Springs
5. Rev. Jon Davis, Christ Episcopal, Cedar Key

⁴ See Appendix Two: Response to the 8 current objections

6. Rev. Charles Erkman, Holy Comforter, Crescent City
7. Rev. Ken Herzog, Trinity Parish, St. Augustine
8. Rev. Walter (Jay) Jamison, Holy Communion, Hawthorne
9. Rev. Matt Marino, Trinity Parish, St. Augustine
10. Rev. Tony Powell, Trinity Melrose
11. Rev. Diane Reeves, St. Joseph, Gainesville
12. Rev. Aaron Smith, Grace, Orange Park
13. Rev. William Smith, Bethany, Jacksonville
14. Rev. William Stokes, St. Mark's, Jacksonville
15. Rev. Valerie Thomas, Trinity Melrose
16. Rev. Adam Young, Chapel of Incarnation
17. Rev. David Weidner, St. Peters, Jacksonville
18. Rev. Can. Raja Zabeneh, St. Paul's, Jacksonville
19. Rev. David Joseph Boyles, St Mary's, Madison
20. Rev. Michael Snider, St. Joseph's, Newberry
21. Rev. Can. Lance Horne, St Bartholomew's, High Springs

In addition, Rev. Tom Murray, St. Marks, Jacksonville signed a similar petition (with their entire vestry, officers and clergy and the Rev. Can. Dr. Miguel Rosada has also separately urged the election to go forward.)

Lay (with delegate status indicated by "yes")

1. Bob White, St. Peter's Fernandina Beach, **Yes**
2. Linda McMorrow, Redeemer, Jacksonville
3. Gladys Bosque, San Lucas, Jacksonville, **Yes**

4. Charles Bond, St. Paul's-by-the-Sea, Jacksonville Beach, **Yes**
5. Rhonda Williams, St. Paul Fed Point, **Yes**
6. Nuvia Pavon, San Lucas, Jacksonville
7. Timothy Williams, St. Paul, Federal Point
8. Penelope Snider, St. Joseph, Newberry
9. Suzanne Smith, St. Paul, Federal Point, **Yes**
10. Michael Smith, St. Paul, Federal Point, **Yes**
11. Cheryl White, St. Peters, Fernandina Beach
12. Jackie Wright, Our Savior, Jacksonville, **Yes**
13. Selby Kaiser, Our Savior, Jacksonville
14. Fred Kaiser, Our Savior, Jacksonville
15. Claudia Booth, St. Peters, Fernandina Beach
16. Innocent Igbokwe, San Lucas, Jacksonville
17. Monique Bosque-Perez, San Lucas, Jacksonville
18. Warren Jackson, Trinity Parish, St. Augustine, **Yes**
19. Brenda Smith, Our Savior, Jacksonville
20. Amerilis Aponte, San Lucas, Jacksonville, **Yes**
21. Charles Ray Bean, Trinity Parish, St. Augustine
22. Angela Bean, Trinity Parish, St. Augustine
23. Neomi Quirch-valle, San Lucas, Jacksonville
24. Himilce Quirch, San Lucas, Jacksonville
25. Gigi Rosada, San Lucas, Jacksonville
26. Rosario Mures, San Lucas, Jacksonville

27. Courtney Wilson, Trinity Parish, St. Augustine, Alternate
28. Leslie Wilson, Trinity Parish, St. Augustine, Alternate
29. Andrew Bonderud, San Lucas, Jacksonville
30. Natalie Bonderud, San Lucas, Jacksonville
31. Susan Bagan, Trinity Parish, St. Augustine, **Yes**
32. Clint Smith, St Peter's, Fernandina
33. Judith Drake, Our Savior, Jacksonville
34. Randle DeFoor, St. Mark's, Jacksonville
35. Frances Hutto, St. Marks, Jacksonville
36. Mark Hutto, St. Marks, Jacksonville
37. Michael Giuliani, Trinity Parish, St. Augustine
38. Agnes Giuliani, Trinity Parish, St. Augustine
39. Cristine Tennant, St. Marks, Jacksonville, **Yes**
40. Jaxon Crews, Chapel of Incarnation, Gainesville, **Yes**
41. Dan Bagan, Trinity Parish, St. Augustine, **Yes**
42. Jim Saghir, Trinity Parish, St. Augustine
43. Jorge Monzon, San Lucas, Jacksonville, **Yes**
44. Konnie Kretlow, Our Savior, Jacksonville
45. Ashley Daw, St. Marks, Jacksonville
46. Garry Bragg, All Saints, **Yes**
47. Carol Henry, Our Savior, Jacksonville, **Yes**
48. Katherine Bissell, St. Johns, Tallahassee
49. Kimberly Whittier, Trinity Parish, St. Augustine

50. Ronald Henry, Our Savior, Jacksonville, **Yes**
51. Jason Richards, St. Marks, Jacksonville
52. Richard Nader, Trinity Parish, St. Augustine
53. Keith Aclin, Trinity Parish, St. Augustine
54. Laurens Jones, Trinity Parish, St. Augustine
55. Elizabeth Potter, Trinity Parish, St. Augustine
56. Marvin Stokes, St. Marks, Jacksonville
57. John Strom, Christ Episcopal, Ponte Vedra
58. Sara Strom, Christ Episcopal, Ponte Vedra
59. Martha Saffran, Trinity Parish, St. Augustine
60. Lynn Doiron, St. John's Cathedral, Jacksonville
61. Ruben Ramirez, San Lucas, Jacksonville, **Yes**
62. Shelton Armour, Redeemer, Jacksonville
63. Christopher Snider, St. Joseph, Newberry, **Yes**
64. Ron Foster, San Jose, Jacksonville
65. Raymur Rachels, St. Marks, Jacksonville
66. Ricardo Medina-Salabarria, Santa Catalina, Jacksonville, **Yes**
67. Janice Schleunes, San Lucas, Jacksonville
68. Patricia MacRae, St. Marks, Jacksonville
69. Jen Reed, Trinity Parish, St. Augustine
70. Jose Avendano, San Lucas, Jacksonville
71. Meredith Schwarz, Trinity Parish, St. Augustine
72. Deborah Brill, San Lucas, Jacksonville

73: Robert Hyde, St. John's Cathedral, Jacksonville

74. Ely Rodriquez, San Lucas, Jacksonville

75. Jose Bosque, San Lucas, Jacksonville

76. Jessie Ellis-Jamison, Holy Communion, Hawthorne, **Yes**

77. Mary Lou Belmont, Trinity Parish, St. Augustine

78. Kari Marino, Trinity Parish, St. Augustine

79. Eduardo Pecheco, San Lucas, Jacksonville, **Yes**

80. Elena Jamison, Holy Communion, Hawthorne

81. Jim Huster, Trinity Parish, St. Augustine

82. Tara Strickland, Trinity Parish, St. Augustine

83. Susan Lieberman, Trinity Parish, St. Augustine

84. John Roberts, Trinity Parish, St. Augustine

85. Andrea Bosque, San Lucas, Jacksonville,

86. Beth Gordon, St. Marks, Jacksonville

87. Sheryl Adams, Trinity Parish, St. Augustine

88. Janice Corbin, Bethany, Hilliard, **Yes**

89. Esabel Redford, San Lucas, Jacksonville

90. Tamara Delaporte, Trinity Parish, St. Augustine

91. Stepan Senchuk, San Lucas, Jacksonville

92. Cristhel Juarez Cruz, San Lucas, Jacksonville

93. Mary Galvin, All Saints, Jacksonville

94. Clemencia Robertson, San Lucas, Jacksonville

95. Elizabeth Rodriquez, San Lucas, Jacksonville

96. Robert Hood, Holy Communion, Melrose, **Yes**

97. Phylis Criswell, St. Marks, Palatka

98. Gloria Chambers, Bethany, Hilliard, **Yes**

99. Tara Shelley, Trinity Parish, St. Augustine

100. Randolph Gordon, St. Marks, Jacksonville

101. Jennifer Juarez, San Lucas

102. John Baker, St. Marks, Jacksonville

103. Willis Ball III, Church of the Good Shepherd, Jacksonville

104. Adriana Ramos, San Lucas, Jacksonville

105. Michelle Benham, Trinity Parish, St. Augustine

106. Joshua Perlin, Chapel of the Incarnation, Gainesville, **Yes**

107. Douglas Milne, St. Mark's, Jacksonville

108. Bruce Belmont, Trinity Parish, St. Augustine

109. Beth Pulignano, St. Mark's, Jacksonville

110. Bruce Barcelo, St Johns Cathedral, Jacksonville

111. Veta Mros, Bethany, Macclenny

112. James Goodwin, Bethany, Hilliard

113. Valentina Osorio, San Lucas, Jacksonville

114. Maricela Caicedo, San Lucas, Jacksonville

115. Helen Tyson, San Lucas, Jacksonville

116. Andy Meda, San Lucas, Jacksonville, **Yes**

117. Kathy Martin, Bethany, Hilliard

118. Himilce De Los Angeles Valverde Blanco, San Lucas, Jacksonville

- 119. Beth Korey, Bethany, Hilliard
- 120. Miller Joiner, San Lucas, Jacksonville
- 121. Sharon Wilson, Christ Episcopal, Ponte Vedra
- 122. Todd Wilson, Christ Episcopal, Ponte Vedra
- 123. Marcos Rosada, San Lucas, Jacksonville
- 124. Vitalia Quirch, San Lucas, Jacksonville
- 125. Rocio Fernandez, San Lucas, Jacksonville
- 126. Rolando Quirch, San Lucas, Jacksonville
- 127. Lily Attalia-Zabeneh, St Paul's, Jacksonville
- 128. Fouad Zabaneh, St. Paul's, Jacksonville
- 129. Karim Zabaneh, St. Paul's, Jacksonville
- 130. Willard Kennedy, St. Mary's, Greencove Springs, **Yes**
- 131. Linda Hargraves, Bethany, Hilliard, **Yes**
- 132. Donna Meyers-Perry, St. Paul's, Jacksonville
- 133. Christopher Delaporte, Trinity Parish, St. Aug
- 134. Mary Lee-White, St. Mark's, Jacksonville
- 135. John Brent, St. Mark's, Jacksonville
- 136. Jordan Eyrick, St. Mark's, Jacksonville
- 137. Dale Moore, Holy Communion, Hawthorne, **Yes**
- 138. Wallace Russell, Holy Communion, Hawthorne
- 139. Christine Burkett, St. Mark's, Jacksonville
- 140. Hugh Burkett, St. Mark's, Jacksonville
- 141. Christina Spencer, St. Mark's, Jacksonville

- 142. Linda Parrish, St. John's Cathedral, Jacksonville
- 143. Dr. Jane White, St. Paul's-by-the-Sea, Jacksonville Beach
- 144. Grace DeLaughter, Trinity Parish, St. Augustine
- 145. Maggie Miller, Trinity Parish, St. Augustine
- 146. Dwight Miller, Trinity Parish, St. Augustine
- 147. Gilbert Pomar, Jr, St. John's Cathedral, Jacksonville
- 148. Charles Commander III, St. Mark's, Jacksonville
- 149. Miguel Rosada Jr., San Lucas, Jacksonville
- 150. Rosemary Hitt, Grace, Orange Park
- 151. Neil Boyle, St. Bartholomew's, High Springs
- 152. Angela Corey, St. John's Cathedral, Jacksonville, **Yes**
- 153. Sheila Chisholm, Grace, Orange Park
- 154. Ona Thomas, Grace, Orange Park
- 155. Yvonne Ludwig, Holy Communion, Gainesville
- 156. Nora Milne, St. Mark's, Jacksonville
- 157. Patricia Bent, St. Mark's, Jacksonville
- 158. Mildred Stout, Grace, Orange Park
- 159. Carol Griffin, St. Bartholomew's, High Springs, **Yes**
- 160. Margaret Addington, St. Bartholomew's, High Springs
- 161. James Addington, St. Bartholomew's High Springs
- 162. William Zoske, Trinity Parish, St. Augustine
- 163. Janice Jones, St. Bartholomew's, High Springs
- 164. Tom Crossman, St. Bartholomew's, High Springs

- 165. Jane Woodward, St. Bartholomew's, High Springs
- 167. Peter Woodward, St. Bartholomew's, High Springs
- 168. Jr. Warden Joe Scianimanico, St. Bartholomew's, High Springs
- 169. Sharon Scianimanico, St. Bartholomew's, High Springs
- 170. Samuel Tift, St. Bartholomew's, High Springs
- 171. Regina Zoske, Trinity Parish, St. Augustine
- 172. Elizabeth Lundy, St. Bartholomew's, High Springs
- 173. Charles T. Jones, St. Bartholomew's, High Springs
- 174. Elizabeth Horne, St Bartholomew's, High Springs
- 175. Tom Reed, Trinity Parish, St. Augustine
- 176. Brooke Reed, Trinity Parish, St. Augustine

177. Austin Reed, Trinity Parish, St. Augustine, **Was a voting delegate last election. Cannot vote this time as he is busy leading all NCAA quarterback in total yardage at Western Kentucky.*

Appendix 2: Detailed

Response to Latest Objections

Excerpt from the objection letter of October 12th

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. **The original search profile and process was held in accordance with canons and overseen by a national church consultant. The candidates were duly vetted by all bishop processes (including the recommendation of their bishop, background checks, psychological assessments, etc). That profile described disagreements over human sexuality. What it did not do is account for a group involving themselves in an unprecedented move to invalidate the will of the majority of the diocese. According to our canons and the of our Standing Committee the solution is not a new profile, but the election of November 19th.**
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. **The election was held in May of 2022. We are now holding a second election due to the obstructionism of this group. This smacks of "throw a monkey wrench in the gears and complain that things stopped."**
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. 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. **The first election was orderly. We are confident the Standing Committee will run a second orderly and valid election. Priests who have not cleaned up their canonical residency occur in every diocese. It is the prerogative of a bishop to accept or reject Letters Dimissory of clergy not serving in a cure. (Title III, Canon III, Section f.1) The thought that clergy have not been canonically resident but now want to vote raises concerns about the objecting group. This point of complaint casts doubt on those clergy and the signatories of the letter rather than on the organization of the diocese.**
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 blasts and trying to clean this up now, but it is too little too late. **The process of selecting lay delegates is set by canon and has not changed.**

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. **We do not believe we have a generalized breach of trust, but rather a group working against our canons and long-established processes with an agenda to derail a legitimate election and disenfranchise canonically chosen voters.** We know of no “long-scheduled conversations” that have not occurred.

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. **A particular candidate's stated and actual reasons may be different.** We can say that our search process had significantly more than the usual number of applicants for bishop, and our national church search consultant commended both the diocesan search and transition committees for their work on presenting a diverse slate of qualified, godly and effective candidates.

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. **If being on diocesan payroll makes someone ineligible due to an unfair advantage then perhaps 1/4 of the bishops in the Episcopal Church are now ineligible for their episcopacies.** Many bishops were on diocesan staffs prior to their election as bishop. This assertion is an insult to our other two candidates who are fine priests.