

25 September, 2024

Dearly Beloved,

I was hoping to write you a simple greeting, acknowledging your kindness in selecting me as your bishop for the period between now and the election of a permanent bishop (and I do so, with all my heart!). However, an issue of great import arose on the cusp of my selection, and I must address it, for the good of all concerned.

It is my belief that the consecration of the Rev. Aaron Long as a bishop for the E and R Synod by our Presiding Bishop is illicit. The Presiding Bishop had no canonical authority to do this. He had, on several occasions, urged the members of the House of Bishops to nominate Rev. Long for the office of bishop in the UECNA, before this act. This idea was rejected by every other bishop of the church, repeatedly. *It was made very plain to the Presiding Bishop that we did not feel it was in the best interests of the church to make this man a bishop.* So, I am at a loss as to why he would, unilaterally, with no canonical authority, without consulting the House of Bishops, *or even informing them*, perform this act.

This event has trivialized our highest order of ordained ministry. It has broken the trust between the Presiding Bishop and all those who swore an oath to uphold the doctrine, discipline, and practice of the United Episcopal Church. It has sent a message to the wider conservative Anglican world that there are those in our ranks who are willing to “play fast and loose” with Catholic order. While I cannot presume to know the Presiding Bishop’s motives, I am convinced of these outcomes.

The House of Bishops is investigating this matter, and, I promise, you will be kept informed of our progress. My motto in the conduct of church business is “no secrets.”

Furthermore, please be assured that there are no “projects of mutual benefit” with the E and R Synod in which the our diocese is participating, beyond the mutual goodwill shared among all brothers in Christ.

I am sorry for any hurt caused by this act.

Your Servant,

+Steven