

Dearly Beloved in Christ,

To be sure, we live in “perilous times,” in which “the love of many [has waxed] cold.” Apostasy is, now, the rule, rather than the exception, among those included under the appellation: “traditionalist Christians.” Every modernist fad, worldly practice, “wind of doctrine,” and breach of ancient church order has made its way into “traditionalist” circles. Decisions of bodies of bishops and senior clergy have become political calculations, more than careful, cautious admonitions and pronouncements, based upon thorough, reverent consideration of the word of God. This is predicated upon a low view of Scripture, which is, always, accepted, first, in this unholy regression toward paganism.

While we are familiar with this lamentable state of affairs, we, seldom, interact with these groups, as they, for the most part, do not crave interaction with us. However, recent events in some of our parishes have left me convinced that some guidance on our interactions with one such body is in order.

The sect known as the Anglican Church in North America has been seen, by many, as the voice of “conservative Anglicanism” on the North American continent. However, from its inception, it never embraced either orthodoxy or catholic order. The scheme was to bring everyone who was, nominally, “conservative” under a “big tent,” in the hope that, some day, differences in theology and practice could be composed. From the beginning, biblical doctrine and orthopraxis took a back seat to organizational unity, size, and respectability. This *modus operandi* is most obvious in this sect’s approach to the ordination of women.

In 2017, the ACNA’s College of Bishops issued a statement declaring, “We agree that there is insufficient scriptural warrant to accept women’s ordination to the priesthood as standard practice throughout the Province. However, we continue to acknowledge that individual dioceses have constitutional authority to ordain women to the priesthood.” At least, we need not wonder about their position! They *know* and *acknowledge* that this practice is unbiblical, yet they will tolerate it! Their denominational constitution is the *final* word! We of the Missionary Diocese of the South and Ozarks of the United Episcopal Church of North America recognize a *higher* constitution.

Now, having given a brief outline of the leadership of this sect’s embrace of the Egalitarian Heresy, I shall endeavor to acknowledge the historical backdrop against which this sad situation has unfolded. The apostasy of the Episcopal Church, the Church of England, and certain other provinces of the Anglican Communion has created a vacuum of organization and leadership in Reformed Protestant Episcopal Christianity, or so it would seem. The Continuing Church has been fraught with division, partisanship, and a lack of theological vigor. However, these difficulties are neither as acute nor as severe as they were, a generation ago. While many are unaware that such churches as the UECNA exist, we continue to consistently stand for the biblical faith without compromise on this crucial issue. Some are under the false impression that we are, really, “in the same boat” with the ACNA (and the nominally more-conservative

REC, which is a sept of the sect). Nothing, however, could be further from the truth, and it has become necessary to make that clear. In giving the following instructions, I am attempting to be as compassionate as I can, while not compromising the UECNA's adamant embrace of 'the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.'"

1) The bishops of the ACNA (and this includes the REC) are, at the least, heretics and, at the most, apostates. They are not to be recognized as Christians or receive the sacraments of Christ's Church in the MDSO, nor should anyone among us receive any sacramental ministry at their hands. To do so would be to commit sacrilege. All clerical dignities are to be withheld from these men, should they interact with us.

2) Taking into consideration the confused Anglican landscape of the time in which we live, individual ministers may use pastoral discretion in deciding whether to admit lower orders of clergy and laymen of the ACNA to the sacraments.

3) However, NO member of the ACNA of either the lay or clerical orders may engage in the leadership or conduct of any service in the MDSO. This includes reading lessons and the laying on of hands at the ordination of presbyters.

4) If there is any confusion regarding the relationship of the MDSO with this sect in any setting, all ministers are to, as lovingly but as plainly as possible, make clear that the MDSO is NOT in communion with the ACNA.

With Love and Concern for the Church,

+Steven, Bishop, MDSO