



Diocese of Edinburgh

Scottish Episcopal Church

EDINBURGH DIOCESAN OFFICE ● 21A GROSVENOR CRESCENT EDINBURGH EH12 5EL

10 August 2022

My Dear Brothers and Sisters

The Primus has exercised his powers under Canon 6 section 9, to suspend Bishop Anne from office whilst she is subject to proceedings under Canon 54. The College of Bishops has tasked me with fulfilling the role of Diocesan Bishop during this suspension (as provided for in Canon 6 section 11).

I am sure that, like me, you will hope that all concerned will benefit from a speedy resolution of these proceedings. In the meantime, please bear three things in mind –

Firstly, a suspension, under Canon 6.9 is a pastoral not a punitive measure. The Primus believes that it is in the best interests of all involved that Bishop Anne should step back to allow the Canonical process to take its course. The College of Bishops arranged to make pastoral care available from outwith the diocese at the outset of the mediation process for those in the diocese who wished it, including Bishop Anne, and steps will be taken to ensure that pastoral care remains available.

Secondly, we must be careful to ensure that the legal proceedings run their proper course without unhelpful public comment or speculation. I would ask you to refrain from such comment whether in the press or on social media. I shall not welcome any attempts to engage me in conversations about the process and I would ask you to respect that.

Thirdly, my role is to fulfil necessary episcopal duties in the diocese during this period, it is not to devise a new strategic direction or to undo work that Bishop Anne has started. Having said that, the Canon is clear that I hold all the powers of the diocesan bishop with respect to Aberdeen and Orkney until such time as Bishop Anne's suspension ends.

I would ask all of you and, through you, the members of your congregations, to redouble your prayers for the well-being of this diocese, for Bishop Anne and for those, like her, caught up in this harrowing process. May we know a healing of fractured relationships and a deepening of our love for one another, love such as we find described in 1 Corinthians 13. May we, all of us, treat one another with kindness and generosity. I know God longs to answer this prayer in us and through us.

I plan to make myself available to you, both online and in person, and I shall write again once I have spoken with the diocesan staff and agreed with them the practicalities involved. Please pray for me as I undertake these unlooked-for responsibilities, as I shall pray for you.

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May the peace of Christ be ours, and may we be given the grace to see Christ in one another

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John", with a small cross-like mark above the first letter.

Rt Revd Dr John Armes
Bishop of Edinburgh