

Note: The original page (http://stpaulsbakersfield.org/word/rector/2007/01/dear_friends_at_st_pauls_1.html) is no longer on the Web. This copy is from the Internet Archive. The letter from Mark Lawrence begins near the bottom of page 3.

26 Jan 07 - 4 Dec 08

2007 2008 2009

[Help](#) Search

Word Quick Links

- [Word Home](#)
 - [Fr. Mark](#)
 - [Fr. Michael](#)
 - [Sunday Sermons](#)

Categories

- [Baptism](#) (1)
- [Books of the Bible](#) (81)
 - [Acts](#) (8)
 - [Colossians](#) (6)
 - [Ephesians](#) (3)
 - [Exodus](#) (3)
 - [Genesis](#) (2)
 - [Hebrews](#) (2)
 - [I Chronicles](#) (1)
 - [I Corinthians](#) (4)
 - [I John](#) (1)
 - [I Kings](#) (1)
 - [I Samuel](#) (4)
 - [I Thessalonians](#) (1)
 - [II Corinthians](#) (1)
 - [II Kings](#) (1)
 - [II Samuel](#) (1)
 - [II Timothy](#) (1)
 - [Isaiah](#) (1)
 - [James](#) (2)
 - [Jeremiah](#) (2)
 - [Joel](#) (1)
 - [John](#) (11)
 - [Joshua](#) (1)
 - [Leviticus](#) (1)
 - [Luke](#) (15)
 - [Mark](#) (9)
 - [Matthew](#) (6)
 - [Numbers](#) (2)
 - [Proverbs](#) (1)
 - [Psalms](#) (4)
 - [Romans](#) (1)
 - [Song of Solomon](#) (1)
- [Christian Education](#) (1)
- [Christian Living](#) (8)
- [Church Calendar and Holidays](#) (48)
 - [Advent](#) (3)
 - [All Saints Day](#) (3)
 - [Ascension Day](#) (1)
 - [Ash Wednesday](#) (1)

INTERNET ARCHIVE
WayBackMachine

4 captures
26 Jan 07 - 4 Dec 08

Go

FEB DEC JAN Close
2007 4 2008 2009 Help

- [Holy Week](#) (2)
- [Lent](#) (8)
- [Mother's Day](#) (1)
- [New Year](#) (1)
- [Pentecost](#) (4)
- [Thanksgiving](#) (2)
- [The Conversion of St. Paul](#) (2)
- [Trinity Sunday](#) (1)
- [Church Growth](#) (2)
- [Church Politics](#) (10)
- [Community](#) (1)
- [Confirmation](#) (2)
- [Creation](#) (2)
- [Current Events](#) (4)
- [David: A Life to Remember](#) (6)
- [Discipleship](#) (4)
- [Evangelism](#) (1)
- [Faith](#) (2)
- [Family](#) (5)
- [Fasting](#) (1)
- [Forgiveness](#) (1)
- [Greg Walgenbach](#) (1)
- [Guidance](#) (1)
- [Healing](#) (1)
- [Hiking](#) (2)
- [Holy Spirit](#) (1)
- [Music](#) (1)
- [Outreach](#) (3)
- [Parish Life](#) (8)
- [Personal](#) (7)
- [Podcast](#) (83)
- [Posted by:](#) (215)
 - [Fr. John](#) (1)
 - [Fr. Mark](#) (139)
 - [Fr. Michael](#) (73)
 - [Guest Speaker](#) (2)
- [Prayer](#) (6)
- [Praying through Life—Living Through Prayer](#) (5)
- [Repentance](#) (1)
- [Richard Hooker](#) (3)
- [Sermons](#) (10)
- [Shape of Discipleship](#) (4)
- [Stewardship](#) (2)
- [Telling Your Story](#) (3)
- [Testimony](#) (5)
- [Trinity](#) (4)
- [Uncategorized](#) (2)
- [Unleashing the Power of the Spirit](#) (4)
- [Worship](#) (1)

Archives

INTERNET ARCHIVE
WayBackMachine
4 captures
26 Jan 07 - 4 Dec 08

Go

FEB DEC JAN Close

2007 4 2008 2009 Help

- [June 2007](#)
- [May 2007](#)
- [April 2007](#)
- [March 2007](#)
- [February 2007](#)
- [January 2007](#)
- [December 2006](#)
- [November 2006](#)
- [October 2006](#)
- [September 2006](#)
- [August 2006](#)
- [July 2006](#)
- [June 2006](#)
- [May 2006](#)
- [April 2006](#)
- [March 2006](#)
- [February 2006](#)
- [January 2006](#)
- [December 2005](#)
- [November 2005](#)
- [October 2005](#)
- [September 2005](#)
- [August 2005](#)
- [July 2005](#)
- [June 2005](#)
- [May 2005](#)
- [April 2005](#)
- [March 2005](#)
- [January 2005](#)
- [December 2004](#)
- [November 2004](#)
- [October 2004](#)
- [September 2004](#)
- [August 2004](#)
- [July 2004](#)
- [June 2004](#)
- [May 2004](#)
- [April 2004](#)
- [March 2004](#)

« [Stepping from the Stable to the Jordan](#) | [Dear Friends](#) »

[Dear Friends at St. Paul's](#)

Posted January 12th, 2007 by [Fr. Mark](#)

Since our move to Charleston has been twice postponed, and most recently, postponed without a departure date in mind, many parishioners may wonder what is happening with my election as Bishop of South Carolina. It is clear at this point that I will not be consecrated on February 24th. I know this will cause problems for many of you who have scheduled flights and lodging. It saddens me that your plans have been disrupted. This delay has also affected the vestry's ability to plan for the future. But since you are in a parish whose rector has been thrust into the center of a national and, even, international debate within the Anglican Communion, this is a difficult path we shall share for a season. In a way it is an honor to walk this way

INTERNET ARCHIVE
Wayback Machine
4 captures
26 Jan 07 - 4 Dec 08
Go
FEB DEC JAN Close
2007 4 2008 2009 Help

differ slightly from one diocese to another, it usually consists of a procedure made up of clergy and laypersons. Every parish in the diocese has delegates that are sent as representatives to the electing convention. The clergy in the diocese also participate in the election. Various candidates are put forward by the diocese. Usually a candidate must get a majority of votes from both the lay delegates and the resident clergy in order to be elected. It often takes several ballots before a candidate gets a majority in both the lay and clerical orders. When it is noted that South Carolina elected me as their bishop on the first ballot, it means that I got at least a majority in both orders on the first vote. The process of election however does not end with this vote.

Since a bishop is elected not only for a diocese, but also for the larger Church, there is a national consent process which is guided by the Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church (TEC). A majority of diocesan bishops and diocesan Standing Committees throughout the Church must therefore grant consent to any election held by a diocese. This is usually given without much fanfare or controversy. In fact many have argued in the past that this is merely a matter of certifying that proper canonical procedures were followed. (This was a mantra heard often during the General Convention process when Gene Robinson's election was confirmed.) Frankly, I didn't accept this argument then, nor do I believe it should be applicable in my case. I do suspect, however, that some have changed their position regarding this matter as it applies to me—holding one opinion when it applied to a bishop-elect who held their position on issues, and quite another now. I shall leave that, however, to their consciences. They must live with themselves as I must live with myself. As it has been said, there's no pillow so soft as a clear conscience.

It may help you to understand the present situation by knowing that shortly after my election an advocacy group in the Church sent a mailing to every bishop and diocesan Standing Committee. This group misrepresented several of my written statements and attributed intentions to me that I did not have. Once this group's mailing muddied the water it has been difficult to settle the pond. Certainly I have advocated rethinking how we do business in The Episcopal Church and the broader Anglican Communion as we step more completely into the 21st Century. This very thing is implicit in the Windsor Report. Along with this, I have held uncompromisingly to the position that TEC acted inappropriately towards historic Christianity and the worldwide Anglican Communion, as well as the teaching of The Episcopal Church, when the Presiding Bishop and others consecrated Canon Robinson as bishop of New Hampshire. This also isn't anything the Archbishop of Canterbury and the collective gathering of Primates in the Communion haven't suggested. Yet even without this group's political interference there may still have been problems. This is because some Standing Committees have objected to South Carolina's request for Alternative Primatial Oversight (APO). I defended this request because, after the General Convention in 2006, I thought many within the Church needed both pastoral space and theological differentiation if we were to remain Anglicans, as well as Episcopalians. Others fear I will lead the diocese out of TEC, or will not work hard enough to keep the diocese from leaving the "national" Church or "denomination." My nuanced statements distancing myself from these fears have not been sufficiently calming for some.

Why haven't I assured the disconcerted more categorically? We are in a profound time of transition within the Anglican Communion—a time when important questions regarding the nature of the Church are being asked and need answers sufficient for this era in which we find ourselves—the Windsor Report is the ultimate validation of this position. I want to be a part of answering these questions in a responsible manner that doesn't truncate the discussion by taking refuge in narrow approaches. The ecclesial questions prompted by the present crisis will clearly not be resolved by disregarding the "bonds of affection" within the worldwide Communion. My adherence to this has caused some to question my loyalty to the Church, even though I have neither taught nor acted contrary to the doctrine, discipline and worship of the Episcopal Church for the past 26 years. Then, there is the fact that some dislike my traditional theological convictions regarding the Scriptures, Creeds, and liturgy, especially in that I hold these traditional beliefs with a willingness to rethink the way The Episcopal Church has functioned ecclesiastically within the larger Anglican Communion. This too is nothing more than is requested by the Windsor Report. I am conservative towards the essential doctrine and discipline of the Faith, yet progressive in regard to how the Church needs to change if it is to live out its calling in this age of globalism.

Frankly, I find it ironic that those of my generation who were so quick to trumpet the need for non-conformity when they were opposed to the "establishment" are most ungracious towards those whom they think do not conform now that they are holding the reigns of power. It gets harder not to come to the sad conclusion that inclusivity in this "faith community" is becoming more narrowly defined by an exclusivistic agenda. Towards this agenda I am now cast in the role of protesting against the rising tide of dubious conformity—a conformity which, at least in the mind of some, will not be brooked. All of this is to say I will be with you here at St. Paul's until this controversy is resolved. (Dare we hope for an Easter resolution?) I

INTERNET ARCHIVE
Wayback Machine
4 captures
26 Jan 07 - 4 Dec 08
Go
FEB DEC JAN Close
2007 4 2008 2009 Help

The Rev. Mark J. Lawrence (Rector)

Posted in [Church Politics](#), [Parish Life](#), [Current Events](#), [Fr. Mark](#)

You can follow any responses to this entry through the [RSS 2.0](#) feed.

You can skip to the end and leave a response. Pinging is currently not allowed.

7 Responses to “Dear Friends at St. Paul’s”

1. [Sinner](#) Says:

[January 12th, 2007 at 3:46 pm](#)

Praise GOD for the next ANGLICAN bishop of South Carolina!

I pray that the ECUSA consents, and that Mark will be consecrated as an Anglican bishop in the USA right after the Primates meeting.

2. [Rev. Jim Lewis](#) Says:

[January 12th, 2007 at 5:16 pm](#)

Rest assured, those of us in S.C. are indeed continuing in our prayers. When it is God’s timing, this consecration will happen. Until then, we will wait confidently in His grace. May He bless and guard the people of St. Paul’s as you wait with us.

3. [want my church back](#) Says:

[January 14th, 2007 at 4:26 pm](#)

Let us all remember that God is in charge of this not man. I am a Christain, an Anglican, and an Episcopalian. Fr. Mark would be able to lead the church where i would like to see it go. The times may be different but God’s word does not change to meet the times.

4. [BradS](#) Says:

[January 14th, 2007 at 5:27 pm](#)

I am removing a comment that was posted yesterday as it appeared to be a troll. Regardless of your opinions, please keep your comments kind and thoughtful. There are plenty of forums out there right now that welcome more controversial discussion.

5. [Gill Frierson. St. Matthias Episcopal, Summerton, SC](#) Says:

[January 16th, 2007 at 12:48 pm](#)

Fa. Mark,

My Parish prayers for you every day and especially during our Sunday service. The Lord will provide. Thanks for your stance. Gill

6. [Gill Frierson. St. Matthias Episcopal, Summerton, SC](#) Says:

[January 16th, 2007 at 12:49 pm](#)

Fa. Mark,

My Parish prays for you every day and especially during our Sunday service. The Lord will provide. Thanks for your stance. Gill

7. [david zinck](#) Says:

[March 19th, 2007 at 3:32 pm](#)



INTERNET ARCHIVE
WayBackMachine
4 captures
26 Jan 07 - 4 Dec 08
Go
FEB DEC JAN Close
2007 4 2008 2009 Help

one day, and very soon, you and those around you will look back at these difficult days only to say, "Look what the Lord has done." I do believe the future is bright, because your faith is in Christ alone. May the Lord bless you and keep you!

Sincerely in Christ,
David Zinck
Barrington, Illinois

Leave a Reply

You must be [logged in](#) to post a comment.

- [Home](#)
 - [Around the Parish](#)
 - [email Lists](#)
 - [Calendar](#)
 - [About This Web site](#)
- [Word](#)
 - [Fr. Mark's Articles](#)
 - [Michael Gilton's Blog](#)
 - [Sermons \(audio\)](#)
- [Worship](#)
- [Ministries](#)
 - [Adult Education](#)
 - [Children's Ministries](#)
 - [Music Ministry](#)
 - [Lenten Organ Series](#)
 - [Outreach](#)
 - [Service](#)
 - [ECW](#)
 -
 - [Student Ministries](#)
 - [Study and Fellowship](#)
 - [Women's Study II](#)
- [Activities](#)
 - [Softball](#)
 - [Lenten Soup Suppers](#)
- [Misc.](#)
 - [History of St. Paul's](#)
 - [Leadership Information](#)
 - [Sitemap](#)