

An Update on Bishop Prince Singh

Bishop Stephen T. Lane <communications@episcopaldioceseofrochester.org>

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To:johnclint@stthomasbath.org <johnclint@stthomasbath.org>

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Episcopal Diocese of Rochester

The Rt. Rev. Stephen T. Lane

Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends.

1 Corinthians 13:7-8

Dear People of God,

On Thursday, September 7, 2023, we learned that the ministry of the Eighth Bishop of Rochester, Prince Singh, has been restricted by the Disciplinary Board for Bishops, effective immediately. He may not function as a priest or bishop in The Episcopal Church until further notice. Friday, we learned that Bishop Singh has resigned as Bishop Provisional of the Dioceses of Eastern and Western Michigan. The Standing Committees of the two dioceses will function as the ecclesiastical authority for the dioceses.

The restriction of ministry is a first step in response to allegations of abuse by Bishop Singh's family and by members of the Diocese of Rochester. The restriction is put in place to prevent further harm from being done. What remains is a process of adjudicating the allegations to determine whether further restrictions or censure are warranted. This process will likely take several months. Bishop Singh is still presumed to be innocent.

It is a momentous and somber event when any ordained person is accused of misconduct. It is even more momentous when a bishop of the church, when OUR bishop, faces charges of misconduct. I suspect we are feeling many things in

response to this news: surprise, shock, confusion, sadness, or perhaps a certain grim satisfaction.

For those of you who took the brave step of speaking to the Intake Officer for Bishops, I hope you will recognize that your grievances and concerns have been heard and respected. For those of you who may now feel that you should have spoken up, I want to say that my door is still open, and there is still an opportunity for conversation and for speaking with the Intake Officer. For those of you who are sad, for Bishop Singh's family and for our diocese, I join you in that sense of grief. This is a moment of sober reflection for all of us.

The disciplinary canons of The Episcopal Church, called Title IV, are meant to provide a measure of justice for victims, a measure of accountability for perpetrators, and a measure of reconciliation for us all. These are difficult outcomes to achieve, and our system does not work perfectly. I do trust the many people who are involved with the process, and I believe that they will function with integrity. We need to wait patiently and without prejudging the outcome.

Our part in all of this is to continue the work of healing and reconciliation here. That means reaching out to one another in the boundless love of God for necessary conversations, for speaking the truth in love, and for forgiving one another. It also means holding in prayer all who have been harmed, the Singh family and members of our diocese. Our differences, our disagreements, and our failures are nothing compared to the endless love that holds us all. I pray that we may receive that love from God and may share it freely with one another.

Faithfully,

+Stephen

(Note: Bishop Lane requests that this letter be read this Sunday, or, at least, posted, circulated, and noted. Thank you. Steve Richards, Communications Director)

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