

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

From: St. John's Anglican Church, in Petaluma, California

Date: February 06, 2008

In response to the lawsuit by the Episcopal Diocese of Northern California, St. John's Anglican Church would like to express its gratitude to the many that have called, e-mailed and expressed their support and prayers for the St. John's parish family.

We reiterate that St. John's Anglican Church has fully owned and maintained its property since 1856. The issue of real estate ownership is a matter of civil law by those who own, have title to and maintain their property. St. John's vigorously disputes the allegations that the Diocese of Northern California or The Episcopal Church can claim ownership to St. John's property-- property that it never purchased, paid for or maintained. It is doubtful that California judges would accede to a bishop's ruling on matters involving real estate and corporate law.

The Diocese of Northern California has accused St. John's of rejecting their settlement offer and thus precipitating the lawsuit. However, their settlement offer was not a viable option as it was only a reassertion of their right to the property (which would have required us to vacate the church by January 6 of this year), along with a financial settlement that would have left us without a house of worship and without the funds necessary to secure a new church home. Furthermore, the current position of The Episcopal Church does not allow St. John's to buy back their own property, as a diocese may only sell property to a buyer not affiliated with any other Anglican organization. St. John's is currently affiliated with the Anglican Diocese of Argentina in the Province of the Southern Cone. These are some of the factors that have contributed to the impasse between St. John's and the diocese.

As a number of similar cases are pending review before the California Supreme Court, St. John's has encouraged the Episcopal Diocese of Northern California to wait for their ruling, rather than waste donors' money in litigating duplicative issues that will be determined within 1 1/2 years. Similar cases in the Dioceses of Los Angeles and San Diego have been put on hold for precisely this reason. St. John's was and is willing to accept the final order of the California Supreme Court but the diocese has chosen to expend non-profit money that could have been used in many other areas of need by instituting unnecessary legal action.

St. John's believes that the best option, absent settlement, is to wait for the final determination from the California Supreme Court while preserving donated assets for charitable and humanitarian uses.

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