

Frequently Asked Questions about the Reunion of the Dioceses of Chicago and Quincy

What is the status of the lawsuit?

When the bishop and many members of the Episcopal Diocese of Quincy broke away in 2008 to become founders of the conservative Anglican Church of North America, they took control of assets that, in the view of the faithful members of the Diocese who remained, belong to the continuing Diocese which maintained its affiliation with the Episcopal Church.

In litigation now before the Eighth Judicial Circuit in Quincy, Illinois, the continuing Episcopal Diocese of Quincy and the Episcopal Church are defending against the removal of those assets from Diocesan control.

The testimony phase of the trial, which lasted two weeks, concluded during the week of April 29. The parties will be filing their final briefs and the judge will render his decision at some point after that. The principal issue concerns who are the rightful leaders of the Diocese of Quincy and therefore the rightful persons in charge of these assets—those who continued in the Episcopal Church or those who chose to leave and affiliate with another denomination in November 2008.

If the lawsuit is lost, what is the impact on the reunion agreement?

If the judge rules against The Episcopal Church, an appeal would most likely be filed. If we should lose the lawsuit, it would have no effect on the Agreement – the reunion of the two Dioceses would continue. Of course, losing the lawsuit would have an impact on the economic resources available to the reunified diocese. We are confident of winning the case either at the trial level or on appeal, although nothing is certain in litigation.

The resolution refers to the diocese as both the Episcopal Diocese of Chicago and the Diocese of Chicago. It also refers to the Diocese of Quincy in the same way. Is this language somehow inconsistent or ambiguous?

No – there is no ambiguity in the Agreement about the fact that the two “Episcopal Dioceses” are the same as the two “Dioceses.”

The Reunion Agreement discusses the assets of the Diocese of Quincy but not the liabilities. Wouldn't the Diocese of Chicago assume any liabilities of Quincy after the reunion?

The chancellors deliberately decided not to mention liabilities since, if there are any, whether they are assumed by the reunited diocese will depend on the particular liability and be determined on applicable legal principles. It is the chancellors' position that we should not prejudice the issue by taking a premature public position.

What legal activities will take place after the reunion is completed?

The salient “legal activities” after reunion are those set forth in paragraph. 7 of the Agreement, and especially paragraph 7(e) which addresses property.

Can you explain paragraph 9 which discusses positions on Diocesan Council, Standing Committee and Bishop and Trustees (B&T)?

With the formation of the Quincy Deanery through the Reunion Agreement, the new deanery will automatically elect one lay and one clergy as representatives to Diocesan Council. This is in accordance with Canon 31.

B&T and Standing Committee will both invite representatives from the former Diocese of Quincy to participate in their meetings with voice and no vote until elections are held in November at our 176th Convention. At that time, both bodies will make “best efforts” to nominate for open seats leaders from the former Diocese of Quincy to fill open seats in those two bodies. Other nominations will certainly be accepted in accordance with the Canons regarding elections and the Convention will elect.

What happens after the Dioceses of Quincy and Chicago pass the resolution and reunion agreement?

As outlined in paragraph 6 of the Resolution, the reunion is effective following the approval of a majority of all Bishops of the Episcopal Church having jurisdiction; the approval of a majority of the Standing Committees of all the Dioceses of the Episcopal Church; and the certification of the foregoing results to the Secretary of the House of Deputies of the General Convention by the Diocese of Chicago.

For more information about the Diocese of Quincy, click here:

http://www.episcopalchicago.org/files/3013/6810/9961/About_the_Diocese_of_Quincy.pdf