



# The Episcopal Church in Delaware

The Rt. Rev. Kevin S. Brown, Bishop

*all things in love*

*1 Cor. 16:14*

## **Pastoral Letter to the Episcopal Church in Delaware from the Rt. Rev. Kevin S. Brown**

April 4, 2019

Blessings to you this Lent, my sisters and brothers in Delaware,

I write this pastoral letter to share with you an important action of the Episcopal Church, and I ask you to help me spread this news as widely as possible, not only within the church but across Delaware and beyond. The Episcopal Church has taken a critical step toward properly addressing past abuses by clergy toward laypersons as well as other clergy. As a bishop colleague of mine has rightly said, “For far too long there has been too much silence, and often misdirection, when persons in our church were brave enough to bring forward allegations against clergy”.

Last summer, General Convention of the Episcopal Church passed Resolution D034, which authorized a temporary suspension of the statute of limitations that required an adult victim of clergy sexual misconduct to make the allegation within ten years of the offense. The suspension of the statute of limitations began on January 1, 2019 and will be in place for three years, ending on December 31, 2021. (There is no statute of limitations on allegations of sexual conduct against a minor. These allegations may be reported at any time.)

In other words, this resolution permits any allegation of sexual misconduct against any bishop, priest, or deacon in the Episcopal Church to be raised through 2021, regardless of when the offense took place. Therefore, you do not have to wonder if an allegation comes from too long ago, regardless of what you may have heard or been told in the past.

The canon in question (Title IV.19.4) and the precise wording of D034 are available on our diocesan website. If you would prefer a printed copy of these materials simply call my office and we will quickly send it to you.

As your bishop, I unequivocally support this resolution and pray that victims of sexual abuse find the strength to seek healing and justice. Delaware, like every diocese in the Episcopal Church, has intake officers who confidentially and pastorally receive allegations of clergy misconduct. You can easily find the contact information for our intake officers on our diocesan website under *Clergy Misconduct* (found within the *Resource* tab), as well as other resources about the entire clergy disciplinary process.

While this step by the church is significant, it is only one small effort to correct the errors of our past. Over the next three years, you will hear more about this resolution, as well as our ongoing efforts in the Episcopal Church to seek justice, promote healing, and rebuild trust.

Please pray for all those affected by misconduct, and pray for the healing power of the Holy Spirit, the very spirit of truth (John 14.17), that Jesus has sent on our behalf. There is no hurt that the resurrection love of Jesus cannot reach, and I claim this hope when I pray for new life for our church and for us all.

Faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kevin". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

The Rt. Rev. Kevin S. Brown  
XI Bishop of Delaware