



The  
**EPISCOPAL CHURCH** *in*  
**CENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA**

11 February 2019

Dear Members of the Episcopal Diocese of Central Pennsylvania,

Among the record number of 502 resolutions considered at our most recent General Convention of the Episcopal Church (Austin, TX July 2018), was Resolution D034, “Amend Canon IV.19.4- Suspending Statute of Limitations.” This resolution was passed in both the House of Deputies and the House of Bishops and took effect on Jan 1, 2019. The resolution changes the canons that direct Clergy Discipline (Title IV), specifically regarding discipline in the instances of clergy sexual abuse against adults. Resolution D034 states that for a period of three years (Jan 1, 2019- Dec. 31, 2021) all time-bound restrictions on the consideration of allegations of sexual abuse by clergy against adults are lifted for three years. The full form of the resolution can be found here: [https://www.episcopalarchives.org/sites/default/files/gc\\_resolutions\\_2018/2018-D034.pdf](https://www.episcopalarchives.org/sites/default/files/gc_resolutions_2018/2018-D034.pdf) This resolution addresses the opportunity for reporting abuse against adults. In our church there is not now, or has ever been, a time limit on reporting clergy sexual misconduct against children and youth under the age of 21.

In the explanation of the resolution, its author, The Rev. Dr. Molly James (CT) writes:

*Given the renewed efforts to mitigate the damage caused by sexual harassment and abuse in the church, it seems only fitting that the church, in turn, equip survivors courageous enough to share their stories with all possible tools in seeking justice. This would include lifting the statute of limitations for a season on sexual harassment and abuse to allow survivors who wish to do so, to pursue disciplinary action.*

Abuse of any kind- physical, emotional, verbal, sexual- is egregious, a violation of our baptismal promises to “respect the dignity of every human being,” and not to be tolerated. Sadly, the effects of abuse can bring shame and embarrassment that, in turn, can cause a reluctance on the part of the victim to report violations. The power dynamic that is evident in clergy-lay person relationships can also influence one’s decision to stay silent. I hope that by lifting the statute of limitations, those who have



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carried- sometimes for years- the painful memories of unwelcome, wounding and hurtful experiences will now find the courage to reach out and seek resolution.

If you have an incident to report, please contact one of the diocesan intake officers, The Rev. Janis Yskamp (Coudersport) at (570) 404-0236 or The Rev. Canon Kate Harrigan (Harrisburg) at (717) 497-3886. The intake officers are trained members of our diocesan disciplinary system that will compassionately and confidentially receive your report. For more information on the Title IV process, please see our website:

<https://diocesecpa.org/clergy-misconduct/>

With love and faith in the Grace of God to make all things new,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Audrey C. Scanlan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

The Rt. Rev. Audrey C. Scanlan  
XI Bishop