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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 4, 2008

**A LETTER TO THE PEOPLE OF THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF PITTSBURGH**

*Pittsburgh, PA – Today the Rev. Dr. James Simons wrote to an open letter to the people of the Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh. Following a vote to “realign” the diocese with the Anglican Province of the Southern Cone, it is his responsibility to reorganize a diocese that remains part of The Episcopal Church.*

To the Members of the Diocese of Pittsburgh:

As I am sure you have heard by now, the vote which attempts to realign the Diocese of Pittsburgh with the Province of the Southern Cone passed the Diocesan Convention on Saturday. This is ironic and sad. Ironic because the theme of the convention was "A House Divided Against Itself Cannot Stand" and sad because a majority of the diocese apparently does not believe this to be true.

I am writing to assure you that The Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh in The Episcopal Church of the United States still exists and Across the Aisle is working to assure this reality.

As a member of the Standing Committee of the Diocese, I will be determining which other members of the Standing Committee are also remaining. Once that has been established, I will appoint several other members to serve on the Standing Committee, Episcopal Church leadership will recognize that body as the ecclesiastical authority of the Diocese, and we will call for a special convention to be held sometime before the end of the year. At that Convention, we will elect individuals to vacated offices and do such reorganization as is necessary.

The initial steps may take several weeks and we will do everything we can to communicate with you in a timely fashion.

*(more)*

*A theologically diverse group of clergy and laypeople committed to remaining in The Episcopal Church.*

LETTER OF THE REV. DR. JAMES SIMONS

October 4, 2008

Page 2 of 2

Personally, I am excited by the days that are before us. Twenty-five per cent of the parishes in the diocese have already contacted us about their desire to remain in The Episcopal Church, and we know that over the next months more will follow. I see a Diocese of Pittsburgh which will be diverse, vibrant, and most of all getting back to the work of proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Please keep all of this in prayer.

In Christ,  
Jim Simons  
Standing Committee, Diocese of Pittsburgh  
Chair, Across the Aisle Steering Committee

**About Across the Aisle:** *A theologically diverse group of Pittsburgh clergy and lay people committed to remaining in The Episcopal Church. [www.episcopalpgh.org](http://www.episcopalpgh.org)*

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