

STATEMENT FROM THE CATHEDRAL CHAPTER OF THE DIOCESE OF GRAHAMSTOWN

6th February 2020

We as the Cathedral Chapter of the diocese of Grahamstown are aware of the widespread concern and anger following the arrest of a member of our church, and his subsequent court appearance on charges of sexual assault. The complainant is also a member of our church. We take this very seriously indeed and wish to make it clear that we stand firmly against all forms of gender-based violence. We are deeply disturbed by this incident.

When the report of the incident reached the Bishop, senior diocesan leaders were immediately sent to meet with the parish leadership and with the family of the complainant. Pastoral care and support has been provided to all involved. Clergy of the diocese have reached out to the family of the complainant and have been welcomed there. Ministry has also been given to the accused. Psychological and pastoral support has been extended to all others affected and has been well received.

We fully support the court proceedings currently under way. We have also launched our own internal processes. The accused has been suspended from all leadership responsibilities and offices in our church. On the advice of our diocesan Registrar (legal officer), we are waiting for the court proceedings to run their course and present their outcome and verdict.

In all this, we are guided by the ACSA Code of Conduct and Pastoral Standards, as well as our Safe Church procedures.

All of the above-mentioned supportive and intervention measures have been on the instruction of the Bishop, who is closely monitoring the situation and is holding all those affected in prayer and love. Let us all do the same in the days ahead.

Issued by The Dean of Grahamstown