

**THE DIOCESE OF VIRGINIA HEARING PANEL
IN THE TITLE IV MATTER OF
THE REVEREND DR. B. CAYCE RAMEY, RESPONDENT**

CHURCH ATTORNEY'S PREHEARING MEMORANDUM CITING CASES

The Church Attorney's Updated Statement of Alleged Offenses contains detailed allegations of the Respondent's disobedience and defiance of his Bishop, an earlier Hearing Panel, the Disciplinary Board, Intake Officer, Investigators, this Hearing Panel, and the councils of the Church. The Updated Statement is replete with citations to applicable canons.

The Church Attorney expects the evidence at the hearing will prove his allegations clearly and convincingly, as required by Canon IV.19.16.

The Court of Review, the Court of Review for Bishops, and a Hearing Panel of the Disciplinary Board for Bishops have decided four cases in the past two years that involved issues similar to those involved here and may assist this Hearing Panel in deciding this case. The Church Attorney now brings those cases to the Hearing Panel's attention.

(1) Ramey

In *The Rev. Dr. B. Cayce Ramey v. The Diocese of Virginia* Opinion (July 2, 2025), the Court of Review held that it lacked jurisdiction to review an earlier Hearing Panel's Decision involving sanctions against this Respondent for his conduct that is the subject matter of part A in the Church Attorney's Updated Statement. Notwithstanding its ruling on its lack of jurisdiction, the Court of Review characterized Respondent's conduct as "troubling defiance." (Opinion. p. 14)

(2) Watkins

In *Tommie Lee Watkins, Jr. v. The Episcopal Diocese of Alabama* (May 16, 2024), the Court of Review stated as follows on page 4 – 5 of its *per curiam* opinion:

We have certain responsibilities to and for each other as members of the Body of Christ. "By virtue of Baptism, all members of the Church are called to holiness of life and accountability to one another." [Canon IV.1] While all members of the Body of Christ have responsibilities to and for each other, at present, only those who are ordained have consented to subject themselves to the Discipline of the Church under Title IV of the Canons. **This commitment includes the obligation to participate fully in a Title IV proceeding.** Because Title IV proceedings are neither criminal nor civil, but ecclesiastical in nature, clergy subject to Title IV may not claim "constitutional guarantees otherwise associated with secular court proceedings." [Canon IV.19.1] (Emphasis supplied.)

All those engaged in the Title IV process have agreed to take on the particular responsibility the Church has to “determine who shall serve as Members of the Clergy of the Church.” [Canon IV.19.1] When Members of the Clergy are alleged to have engaged in acts of misconduct, the Church, through its Title IV processes, takes responsibility for determining whether the Member of the Clergy should continue to serve, and/or if any conditions should be imposed on their service. The question of whether the Member of the Clergy committed an Offense is asked in the service of the broader question of whether the Member of the Clergy should continue to exercise the gifts and spiritual authority conferred in Ordination, and how the whole body of the Church can “resolved [*sic*] conflicts by promoting healing, repentance, forgiveness, restitution, justice, amendment of life and reconciliation among all involved or affected.” [Canon IV.1] The Title IV process is undertaken for the good of the whole body.

Then, on page 32, the *Watkins* Court added:

Secular legal proceedings operate on the principle that the protection of individual rights assures justice. In contrast, ecclesiastical disciplinary proceedings operate on the principle that we all have a responsibility to support each other in our life in Christ and that those who are ordained have “accepted additional responsibilities and accountabilities for doctrine, discipline, worship, and obedience.” [Canon IV.1]

(3) *Monk*

In *The Rev. Edward R. Monk v. Episcopal Diocese of Dallas* (March 24, 2026), the dissent in the Court of Review stated as follows on pages 32-34:

The “discipline” of the Church includes, though is not limited to, the disciplinary standards and processes contained in Title IV of the Canons. Clergy subject themselves to Title IV by virtue of their ordination. They voluntarily take on obligations and accountability that other Christians do not have. Some of these obligations are substantive: for instance, clergy (but not other Christians) are required to refrain from “holding and teaching publicly or privately, and advisedly, any Doctrine contrary to that held by the Church,” Canon IV.4.1(h)(2). Others are procedural: for instance, clergy (but not other Christians) are required to “cooperate” in any inquiry into their conduct under the process set forth in Title IV, Canon IV. See Canon IV.3.1(b). This ongoing accountability is part and parcel of what it means to be an ordained person in this Church.

Even though Title IV borrows some of its concepts and procedures from secular law, its purposes and practices are very different from either a civil or a criminal case. The purpose of a secular legal case is to find facts, apply the law, and thereby do justice to the parties before the court. Within the limits created by court rules, a civil or criminal defendant is responsible only for their own interests; they have no broad duty of cooperation. Some bedrock rights, such as

the Fifth Amendment privilege against self-incrimination, exist to safeguard defendants' right not to cooperate. It may or may not be good trial strategy, but a defendant in a secular case is basically entitled to sit back and say, "prove it."

Title IV is radically different. It is rooted not in the secular law but in the Gospel. Its values go far beyond those of a secular legal case, and include "healing, repentance, forgiveness, restitution, justice, amendment of life and reconciliation among all involved or affected," Canon IV.1. **Everyone involved, including a member of the clergy who may have committed an offense, shares the responsibility for upholding those values and taking part in the Church's process for accountability.** With the single exception of the Church Attorney, the Canons do not require or assume the presence of lawyers in the process, because the Title IV process is not a legal proceeding. **Rather it is a "council of the Church," in which an ordained person is called by ordination itself to take part.**

For that reason, clergy are required to "cooperate" with proceedings under Title IV. See, e.g., Canon IV.3.1(b) (clergy liable to discipline for "failing without good cause to cooperate with any investigation or proceeding conducted under authority of this Title"); Canon IV.6.7 (initial notice from intake officer to respondent required to "remind the Member of the Clergy of his or her duty under Canon IV.3.1.b to cooperate in the subsequent proceedings"); Canon 19.1 (Title IV is exercise of Church's responsibility "to determine who shall serve as Members of the Clergy of the Church," to which members of the clergy have voluntarily subjected themselves; accordingly they can not claim "constitutional guarantees otherwise associated with secular court proceedings," such as the right to remain silent).

Clergy can be held accountable to that duty of cooperation in at least two ways. First, failure to cooperate is itself an Offense under the Canons, which can be the subject of discipline. And second, when a matter has proceeded all the way to a Hearing Panel, failure to appear at and participate in the hearing significantly limits the scope of any appeal the clergy person may make to this Court.

(Emphasis supplied.)

Later, at p. 34, the *Monk* dissenters decried "games-playing by Respondents" by refusing to participate.

(4) *Howard*

In *In the Matter of the Rt. Rev. Samuel Johnson Howard* (August 25, 2025), a Hearing Panel of the Disciplinary Board for Bishops stated as follows on page 4 of its Decision and Order on the Church's Motion to Compel Responses and for Other Discovery Relief:

The Panel grants the relief sought by the Church as specified below. The Canons plainly require a Respondent in a Title IV proceeding to cooperate with any investigation or proceeding conducted under the authority of the Title. Canon IV.3.1(b); see also, Canon IV.19.18 (“it shall be the duty of all members of the Church to appear and testify or respond when duly served with a notice to do so...”). Here, the record evinces what can only be inferred as numerous intentional acts by Respondent to avoid cooperation with this process. This Panel has sent multiple notices as described above to Respondent via his email address and via Certified Mail. Not only has Respondent failed to appear at two scheduled conferences and at the oral argument for the Church’s Motion to Compel, he has failed to comply with multiple discovery deadlines contained in the Orders, including failing to comply with discovery demands including answers to interrogatories and requests for records and documents. When such failures occur, the Hearing Panel has the authority to “impose, after reasonable notice and an opportunity to be heard reasonable sanctions on any party for failure to comply with any discovery order.” Canon IV.13.11(a), Canon IV. 13.11(b) sets forth a wide range of options that may be exercised by the Hearing Panel “for conduct the Panel deems to be disruptive, dilatory, or otherwise contrary to the integrity of the proceeding.”

Date: June 23, 2026

/s/ Bradfute W. Davenport, Jr.
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