



Western Jurisdiction

The United Methodist Church

March 25, 2022

Dear Friends,

Thank you for your note and the questions you raise.

As you know, the complaint process is a confidential matter. The complaints against Bishop Carcaño have been received and are being processed as per ¶ 413. The response team is made up of one layperson and one clergy person from Western Jurisdiction Committee on the Episcopacy as well as bishops from the WJ College and is ethnically diverse.

The process being followed is outlined in the Book of Discipline (¶413) and is similar to the process used when complaints are made against clergy. Unlike secular bodies that use suspension at the end of a complaint process as a punitive action, our rules use it at the beginning of a complaint process, “When deemed appropriate to protect the well-being of the complainant, the Church and/or bishop,” (¶ 413.3.a). It was for protection from harm for all parties that suspension was put in place. The BOD allows for up to 60 days, but should a just resolution be achieved prior to May 7, the suspension would be lifted.

The process for both clergy and bishops works under the rule of confidentiality that says information is only shared with those persons who need to know it. This is in place to protect and care for the one under complaint as well as those making the complaint. Complaints are not meant to be discussed and adjudicated in the public sphere, but in settings conducive to deep conversation that restores all to right relationship.

Neither one of us is serving on the response team, but we can speak from our own experience as serving on other WJ response teams (as well, in the case of Bishop Karen, from being under complaint). A high value is placed in moving through the process honoring the dignity of all involved and using every tool possible to achieve just resolution.

We share with you a deep admiration for the role and voice Bishop Carcaño has had in our denomination, nation, and world. She has been a tireless advocate for those on the margins and has extended God’s love and justice in critical ways. We are praying for her and for all involved that a just resolution will be achieved.

Yours truly,

Bishop Karen Oliveto
President, WJ College

Rev. Mary Huycke
Chair, WJ Committee on the Episcopacy