

August 13, 2019

Dear Caroline Church Parishioner:

A short update for your consideration. First, I was a bit taken aback by the rector's email that described me as a "former parishioner." Be assured that I have not asked to be removed from the membership roles of our church.

Second, any inference the rector wishes you to draw that I somehow stole or hacked an email list is patently untrue. Should anyone not wish to receive these emails, let me know and I will remove you from the list. Only one person has emailed to inform me that she now lives on the west coast and is no longer a member.

Third, I am gratified by the multiple emails, phone calls and personal encounters I have received expressing support, as well as shock at the action of the Vestry combining the restricted funds. Those encounters have greatly lifted my spirits. Apparently last week's email and launch of the website have created a great deal of interest and discussion. Over 500 page visits have been logged as of Sunday morning. On Friday my attorney received an email from the attorney representing the church, demanding that the web site be taken down. It would appear that along with ignoring New York law regarding the use/misuse of donor restricted funds, the church wants to ignore the First Amendment—at least as far as freedom of speech is concerned.

For three years I attempted to quietly get the Vestry to reverse its unwise and unlawful actions to no avail. Even after the lawsuit was commenced we attempted to resolve the matter without publicity. The church chose not to do so. That is their choice. The lawsuit is now on the public record and the church publicly announced it to you, the parishioners, at three quarterly "town hall meetings." That too was their choice. I am now providing you with information to give my side of the story, with the data to back it up. It is my choice—not theirs—of what vehicles I use to convey that message.

This is an uncomfortable time for all of us. I urge you to get the facts, and I'm putting more up on the [savethechurtyard.org](http://www.savethechurtyard.org) site as this progresses. I don't think the bottom line is complicated: if the church accepts donations for a particular purpose, it is their obligation to see that the money is used for that purpose. Thank you again for listening with an open mind.

Chris Haring

www.savethechurtyard.org