FORM 3 (Rules 6 and 17)

Clergy Discipline Measure 2003

Statement in support of a Complaint, or in support of an Answer to a Complaint

Box for use only by the Registrar of Tribunals	*Statement submitted by:* *Name of maker of statement:* *Date of statement:*

In the matter of the complaint

Enter the name of the complainant.
Enter the name of the member of the clergy about whom a complaint is made.

made by The Board of Deputies of British Jews

against: Rev Dr Stephen Sizer

My full name is: **Canon Garth Hewitt**

My contact address, including postcode, is:

1 De Walden Mews
Eastbourne
BN20 7 QU

***Telephone & e-mail details are optional, but it could be helpful to the registrar and bishop to have them.*

My telephone number is: 07767 794931

My e-mail address is: garth@amostrust.org

The matters in this statement to which I refer are all within my own knowledge, except where I indicate otherwise. If anything is not within my own knowledge then I set out the source of any matters of information and belief:

You must explain in your statement how you know about each of the matters you describe, ***unless*** *you know about them because you have* ***personally*** *seen or observed them.*

Dear Bishop Tim,

Warmest greetings.

I wanted to write to you about Stephen Sizer as I gathered complaints have been made about him raising the issue of anti-Semitism. This happened once before and after going through a CDM it was agreed that he was not anti-Semitic. I'm sorry to see the issue raised again as it seems to be an attempt to undermine his ministry. Obviously if he was anti-Semitic that would not be acceptable, but having worked with Stephen in different ways for years I have not seen this to be the case.

I have known Stephen since he was at University, and took him on one of his early visits to the Holy Land when we were both on the staff of St Saviour's in Guildford. Since then as you know he has become recognised as an expert on Christian pilgrimage in the Holy Land and also Christian Zionism. Stephen's motivation is working for peace and strangely those who are truly dedicated to a peace for both communities, ie Israeli and Palestinian, can get criticised by those who only want one viewpoint to be represented. I am glad to say that Stephen is committed to international law, the Fourth Geneva Convention, and human rights. He is committed to a way forward that would bring equality and dignity to both communities.

In the end Stephen is a gentle but firm peacemaker, who lives out the Biblical mandate that all are made in the image of God, and I have not seen anything that reflects anti-Semitism. He has worked with Jewish peace activists and Rabbis, and has won their respect and also the respect of the Muslim community. I believe he has been a witness to the Christian values of peacemaking.

As you may be aware in the final days of Stephen's time in the Guildford Diocese strict restrictions were put on him in terms of what he could do and where he could go. I went and chatted with Bishop Andrew about this as I was concerned that an aspect of Stephen's ministry was being silenced. I then became a Trustee of Stephen's Trust for a couple of years in order to help restore his ministry. It is a ministry that happens all over the world particularly in Africa and I'm glad to see that his gifts are being fully used again.

It is a very difficult time for him with Joanne's cancer diagnosis – I think this is a time for the church to rally round them in support. He has given his life to the ministry of the church and particularly following in the footsteps of Jesus in terms of sharing the gospel and working for equality, peace and justice. I think this is the time to encourage him and his work with Peacemaker Trust – a work which is at a very significant stage.

I am the Founder of the Amos Trust, and our Director, Rev Chris Rose, is with our partners in South Africa just now, so he has asked me to respond on behalf of Amos. I enclose some words that he put in his letter to Bishop Christopher Hill the last time this issue was raised:

"I am writing on behalf of Amos Trust to voice our concern over the accusations made against Stephen Sizer of anti-Semitism. As you know, Amos Trust is a small creative Christian human rights organisation that was named after the call of the prophet Amos: 'Let justice flow like rivers and righteousness like a never ending stream'.
We have worked closely with Stephen for many years. I have heard him speak on numerous occasions and read his written works and I have no doubt that Stephen is driven by a commitment to justice, peace, non-violence and above all reconciliation.
He is motivated by the cry of Palestinian Christians for justice and solidarity, in the sure belief that this will also provide the best hope for security and peace for Israelis.
The allegations against him are not only unfounded but are a deliberate attempt to try to prevent church leaders from speaking out in a prophetic manner on the situation facing Palestinians.
While it is important to examine such accusations and to ascertain whether there is any validity to them, it is also important to recognise the motivation that lies behind them".

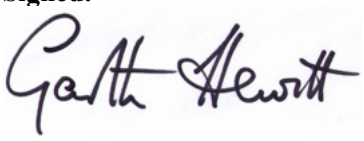
I hope these comments from myself and Chris are helpful in terms of how to address the current situation.

With best wishes.

I believe the facts in my statement to be true. I am aware that the contents of this statement may be made public

You must sign and date this statement.

Signed:



Dated: 27 November 2018