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.

made by Marie van der Zyl

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

Against Revd Dr Stephen Sizer

My full name is: Canon Dr Mike Butterworth

My contact address, including postcode, is:

3 Horseshoe Close
Cheddington
Leighton Buzzard
LU7 0SB

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

**My telephone number is: 01296 661903

**My e-mail address is: mikebutterworth@waitrose.com

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:

I have known Stephen Sizer since at least January 1996 when we first discussed his undertaking a thesis for a Master's Degree leading to a Doctorate. This was continued, after I moved from Oak Hill College, under the supervision of Dr Martin Davie and then Dr Alan Storkey.

I was Academic Registrar and lecturer in Old Testament and Hebrew at the college, which was accredited by Middlesex University, and also a fairly regular attender at Southgate Progressive Synagogue for about 17 years. I preached there during their 50th year celebrations and attended several study lunches. When I later became Principal of *St Albans and Oxford Ministry Course* I facilitated a module in which leaders in religions other than Christianity came to speak, and for which the assessment required students to dialogue with a member of another religion and produce a reflection. It is my view that this was one of the most effective exercises for developing inter-religious understanding.

I believe that I am sensitive to the way that what is *not* said can give a wrong impression, and I read books about Zionism and anti-Zionism with an awareness of how this might come across to friends in the Southgate Progressive Synagogue and in CCJ. I have occasionally written to Stephen to suggest that he might be thought to be too pro-Palestinian and have always been reassured by his response .Even in these cases, with writings taken out of context, it would be impossible to build a genuine case for antisemitism.

Stephen is careful to observe and to point out that Zionism is not identical with Judaism. He has been consistently critical of 'Christian Zionism' and has argued that it is incompatible with biblical teaching. At no time have I seen any evidence of antisemitism – quite the opposite. He desires the wellbeing of Jewish people everywhere - and also of Palestinians and others – and seeks to offer criticism that is fair and constructive.

I have met with Stephen many times, initially in discussion his research, but also since that time in reading his writings, both published and private, and in personal conversation. He has been passionately concerned for mutual understanding and reconciliation between religious communities and that is why he set up *Peacemakers* – and why, despite my advancing years, I was happy to be a Trustee.

I have read other complaints against Stephen in the past, including one by Geoffrey Alderman, a member of the academic officers of Middlesex University, who wrote critical piece against Stephen's thesis (incidentally misspelling 'Sizer' throughout) with the aim of rescinding the PhD.

I have read the Complaint against Stephen and find its allegations literally unbelievable. The vindictive tone of the accusation, the lack of credible evidence, the drawing of illogical conclusions from ambiguous situations, the dredging up of old material dealt with long since – all these suggest that this is a vicious reaction to fair criticism.

Stephen Sizer is a true friend to Jews and the nation of Israel.

Yours sincerely

Mike Butterworth

Canon Dr; formerly Academic Registrar of Oak Hill College.

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

Signed: Mike Butterworth (emailed)
Dated: 24 November 2018