

STANDING COMMISSION ON LITURGY AND MUSIC SUBCOMMITTEE ON SAME-SEX MARRIAGE RITES

Membership

Mr. Drew Nathaniel Keane, <i>Chair</i>	Georgia, IV	2018
The Rt. Rev. Dorsey McConnell	Pittsburgh, III	2018
The Rev. Canon James Turrell	Bethlehem, III	2018
The Rev. Devon Anderson, <i>Ex Officio</i>	Minnesota, VI	2018
Ms. Nancy Bryan, <i>Liaison with Church Publishing</i>		

Mandate

2015-A054 of the 78th General Convention instructed the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music “to monitor the use of this material and report to the 79th General Convention.” The phrase “this material” refers to Liturgical Resources 1: *I Will Bless You and You Will Be a Blessing: Revised and Expanded*, 2015.

Summary of Work

In April of 2017, the SCLM published an online survey to gather data on the reception of Liturgical Resources 1: *I Will Bless You and You Will Be a Blessing: Revised and Expanded*, 2015 throughout the Church. A particular concern of the survey focused on soliciting responses to two marriage liturgies that were authorized for trial use at the 2015 General Convention.

One of the liturgies—The Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage 2—is a gender-neutral version of the marriage service in the 1979 Book of Common Prayer. The other—The Witnessing and Blessing of a Marriage—was originally approved in 2012 for blessing same-sex unions, then revised in 2015 to include vows of marriage.

The following is a summary of the survey responses:

Total number of responses: 262; app. 60% clergy and 40% laity; less than 5% (11 people) belong to a couple that has used one of the two rites for their own marriages.

1. Have you read, used, or experienced any of the material in Liturgical Resources I?
 - a. 71.8%: Yes
 - b. 28.2%: No

2. Have the trial liturgies for marriage been authorized for use in your diocese?
 - a. 55.7%: Yes
 - b. 22.9%: No
 - c. 19.5%: Don't know
 - d. 1.9%: One has, but not the other

3. Has one of the trial liturgies been used at your parish?
 - a. 52.7%: No
 - b. 34.7%: Yes
 - c. 12.6%: Don't know

4. If you have used or read it, how would you characterize your overall response to The Witnessing and Blessing of a Marriage (the revision of the Blessing rite contained in the first edition of I Will Bless You)? – Sliding scale response 1 (poor) – 4 (excellent)
 - a. 4 (excellent): 50.5%
 - b. 3: 23%
 - c. 2: 6.5%
 - d. 1 (poor): 20%

5. If you have used or read it, how would you characterize your overall response to The Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage 2 (the revision of the Marriage rite contained in the Book of Common Prayer, 1979)? – Sliding scale response 1 (poor) – 4 (excellent)
 - a. 4 (excellent): 53.7%
 - b. 3: 23.4%
 - c. 2: 7.4%
 - d. 1 (poor): 15.4%

6. If you have used or read it, how would you characterize your overall response to the Pastoral Guide contained in Liturgical Resources 1? – Sliding scale response 1 (poor) – 4 (excellent)
 - a. 4 (excellent): 34.4%
 - b. 3: 42%
 - c. 2: 9.2%
 - d. 1 (poor): 14.5%

7. If you have used or read it, how would you characterize your overall response to the Theological Resource contained in Liturgical Resources I. – Sliding scale response 1 (poor) – 4 (excellent)
- a. 4 (excellent): 41.3%
 - b. 3: 31.7%
 - c. 2: 9.5%
 - d. 1 (poor) 17.5%

The survey provided the opportunity for open-ended responses to each section of Liturgical Resources 1: *I Will Bless You and You Will Be a Blessing: Revised and Expanded, 2015* as well as to the document as a whole. Comments focused on questions of style, theology, equality, and pastoral concerns. Regarding each of these areas of concern, we found a roughly equal number of positive and negative responses. No consensus formed around whether or not a further revision of this resource or the trial use rites is desirable at this time. Among comments intimating towards a revision of the resource or the trial use rites, no consensus emerged regarding the direction revision might take.

After reviewing the survey results and discussing possible responses, the SCLM believes that Liturgical Resources 1: *I Will Bless You and You Will Be a Blessing: Revised and Expanded, 2015* will continue to serve the Church well in its current edition and does not recommend a further revision at this time. The SCLM recommends “The Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage 2” and “The Witnessing and Blessing of a Marriage” both continue in trial use status until such a time as the General Convention initiates a comprehensive revision of the Book of Common Prayer.