

General Convention of The Episcopal Church 2024 Archives' Research Report

Resolution No.: 2024-A093
Title: Add Provisions of 2018-B012 to Canons
Proposer: Task Force on Communion Across Difference
Topic: Canons, Liturgy, Marriage

Directly Related: (Attached)

2018-A086 Authorize Marriage Rites and Added Provisions for Same-Sex Couples
2018-B012 Authorize Trial Liturgies for Same-Sex Marriage

Indirectly Related: (Available in the [Acts of Convention](#) database, searchable by resolution number)

None

In preparing this report, the Archives researched the resolutions in the Acts of Convention database for the period 1973 through 2022, selecting “direct” resolutions that have a substantive bearing on the proposed legislation. The “direct” resolutions are attached and “indirect” resolutions are available in the Acts of Convention database. Committee members who require other research assistance should contact the Archives through the [Research Request Form](#).

A093 - Add provisions of 2018-B012 to canons

Final Status: Not Yet Finalized

Proposed by: Task Force on Communion Across Difference

Has Budget Implications: No

Cost:

Amends C&C or Rules of Order: Yes

Requests New Interim Body: No

Changes Mandate Of Existing Ib: No

Directs Dfms Staff: No

Directs Dioceses: No

Directs Executive Council: No

HiA: No House Assigned

Legislative Committee Currently Assigned: No Committee Assigned

Completion Status: Incomplete

Latest House Action: N/A

Supporting Documents: No

Resolution Text

Resolved, the House of _____ concurring,

That the 81st General Convention amend Canon I.19.3 to add a new subsection e thereto, to read as follows:

<Amended text as it would appear if adopted and concurred. Scroll below the line of asterisks (***) to see the version showing all deleted and added text.>**

I.19.3

e. Bishops exercising ecclesiastical authority, or where appropriate ecclesiastical supervision, who hold a theological position that does not embrace marriage for same sex couples, shall in the case of remarriage after divorce, invite another bishop of this Church to oversee the consent process and to receive any report of such Marriages, as provided in Canon I.19.3.c.

<Proposed amended resolution text showing exact changes being made:>

I.19.3

e. Bishops exercising ecclesiastical authority, or where appropriate ecclesiastical supervision, who hold a theological position that does not embrace marriage for same sex couples, shall in the case of remarriage after divorce, invite another bishop of this Church to oversee the consent process and to receive any report of such Marriages, as provided in Canon I.19.3.c.

And be it further

Resolved, that Canon III.12.3.a be amended to add a new subsection 3 thereto, to read as follows:

<Amended text as it would appear if adopted and concurred. Scroll below the line of asterisks (***) to see the version showing all deleted and added text.>**

III.12.3.a

3. In dioceses where the bishop exercising ecclesiastical authority (or, where applicable, ecclesiastical supervision) holds a theological position that does not embrace marriage for same-sex couples, and there is a desire to use such rites by same-sex couples in a congregation or other community of faith, the bishop exercising ecclesiastical authority (or ecclesiastical supervision) shall invite, as necessary, another bishop of this Church to provide pastoral support to the couple, the Member of the Clergy involved and the congregation or other community of faith.

<Proposed amended resolution text showing exact changes being made:>

III.12.3.a

3. In dioceses where the bishop exercising ecclesiastical authority (or, where applicable, ecclesiastical supervision) holds a theological position that does not embrace marriage for same-sex couples, and there is a desire to use such rites by same-sex couples in a congregation or other community of faith, the bishop exercising ecclesiastical authority (or ecclesiastical supervision) shall invite, as necessary, another bishop of this Church to provide pastoral support to the couple, the Member of the Clergy involved and the congregation or other community of faith.

Explanation

The compromise of General Convention Resolution 2018-B012 has simultaneously ensured that same-sex couples have access to trial-use marriage liturgies in every diocese where same-sex marriage is permitted under civil law and authorized bishops to delegate their

pastoral oversight in such cases when their theological convictions require it. Because those provisions are tied to the authorization of specific liturgies for trial use, they would not automatically apply if a marriage rite suitable for use by same-sex couples were to be added to the Book of Common Prayer.

Because Article X of the Constitution of the Episcopal Church provides that the Book of Common Prayer "shall be in use in all the Dioceses of this Church," no specific canonical changes are necessary to ensure continued access to authorized marriage rites once they are incorporated into the Book of Common Prayer. This resolution formalizes those provisions of B012 concerning the responsibilities of bishops whose theology does not embrace same-sex marriage when a congregation within their diocese intends to perform same-sex marriages. As is already the case under B012, each bishop will discern the extent to which pastoral support from another bishop is necessary to ensure both the protection of their own conscience and full access for same-sex couples to authorized marriage rites.



Resolution Number: 2018-A086
Title: Authorize Marriage Rites and Added Provisions for Same-Sex Couples
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 79th General Convention authorize “The Witnessing and Blessing of a Lifelong Covenant” (as appended to the report of the Task Force on the Study of Marriage), authorized for use by the 78th General Convention, to be added to the “Enriching Our Worship” series, for use in jurisdictions of the Episcopal Church in which 1) the couple desiring marriage are of the same sex; and 2) the civil jurisdiction in which the marriage would occur does not allow marriage of same-sex persons; and be it further

Resolved, That this rite is to be used under the direction of a bishop exercising ecclesiastical authority (or ecclesiastical supervision); and be it further

Resolved, That it shall be within the discretion of any Member of the Clergy of this Church to decline to officiate at any rite of blessing defined herein; and be it further

Resolved, That no member of the Clergy shall officiate at any rite of blessing defined herein for a couple in which one or both seeking the blessing have been previously married, except as provided under Canon I.19; and be it further

Resolved, That under the canonical direction of the Rector or Member of the Clergy in charge and where permitted to do so by civil law, provision will be made for all couples desiring to use this liturgy in their local congregation or worshipping community, provided that nothing in this Resolve narrows the authority of the Rector or Priest-in-Charge (Canon III.9.6(a)); and be it further

Resolved, That in dioceses where the bishop exercising ecclesiastical authority (or, where applicable, ecclesiastical supervision) holds a theological position that does not embrace the blessing of the relationship of same-sex couples, and there is a desire to use such rites by same-sex couples in a congregation or worshipping community, the bishop exercising ecclesiastical authority (or ecclesiastical supervision) shall invite, as necessary, another bishop of this Church to provide pastoral support to the couple, the Member of the Clergy involved and the congregation or worshipping community in order to fulfill the intention of this resolution that all couples have convenient and reasonable local congregational access to this rite; and be it further

Resolved, That bishops exercising ecclesiastical authority, or where appropriate ecclesiastical supervision, who hold a theological position that does not embrace the blessing of the relationship of same-sex couples, shall in the case of blessing after divorce, invite another bishop of this Church to oversee the consent process and to receive any report of such Blessings, as provided in Canon I.19.3(c); and be it further

Resolved, That this Church continue to honor the theological diversity of this Church in regard to matters of human sexuality, and that no bishop, priest, deacon or lay person shall be coerced or penalized in any manner as a result of his or her conscientious objection to or support for this rite; and be it further

Resolved, That the 79th General Convention direct the Secretary of General Convention and the Custodian of the Standard Book of Common Prayer, in consultation with the outgoing Chair of the Task Force on the Study of Marriage and the Chairs of the Legislative

Committees to whom this legislation is referred, to finalize and arrange with Church Publishing for the publication (in English, Spanish, French, and Hatitian Creole of the material contained in “Enriching Our Worship” as approved by the 79th General Convention; the General Convention Office to make these materials available electronically at no cost no later than the first Sunday of Advent 2018; and be it further

Resolved, That the 79th General Convention refer “The Blessing of a Lifelong Relationship” (as appended to the report of the Task Force on the Study of Marriage) to the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music and the Standing Commission on Structure, Governance, Constitution and Canons for further review and recommendations including a comprehensive study of the legal implications and other ecclesial options.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Austin, 2018* (New York: General Convention, 2018), pp. 1134-1135.



Resolution Number: 2018-B012
Title: Authorize Trial Liturgies for Same-Sex Marriage
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 79th General Convention authorize for continued trial use, in accordance with Article X of the Constitution and Canon II.3.6, “The Witnessing and Blessing of a Marriage” and “The Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage 2” (as appended to the report of the Task Force for the Study of Marriage to the 79th General Convention); and be it further

Resolved, That the 79th General Convention authorize for trial use, in accordance with Article X of the Constitution and Canon II.3.6, “The Blessing of a Civil Marriage 2” and “An Order for Marriage 2” (as appended to the report of the Task Force for the Study of Marriage to the 79th General Convention), beginning the first Sunday of Advent, 2018; and be it further

Resolved, That the period of trial use for these liturgies shall extend until the completion of the next comprehensive revision of the Book of Common Prayer; and be it further

Resolved, That the SCLM monitor the use of these rites as part of their work of revising the Book of Common Prayer; and be it further

Resolved, That the material prepared by the TFSM with regard to paragraph one of “Concerning the Service” of Marriage, the proper prefaces for Marriage and the Catechism be referred to the SCLM for serious consideration as they engage in the process of revision of the Book of Common Prayer; and be it further

Resolved, That all of this material be authorized for publication as part of Liturgical Resources 2 (as appended to the report of the TFSM) and be made available electronically in English, Spanish, French, and Haitian Creole at no cost by the first Sunday of Advent, 2018; and be it further

Resolved, That under the canonical direction of the Rector or Member of the Clergy in charge and where permitted to do so by civil law, provision will be made for all couples desiring to use these marriage liturgies in their local congregation or worshipping community, provided that nothing in this Resolve narrows the authority of the Rector or Priest-in-Charge (Canon III.9.6(a)); and be it further

Resolved, That in dioceses where the bishop exercising ecclesiastical authority (or, where applicable, ecclesiastical supervision) holds a theological position that does not embrace marriage for same-sex couples, and there is a desire to use such rites by same-sex couples in a congregation or worshipping community, the bishop exercising ecclesiastical authority (or ecclesiastical supervision) shall invite, as necessary, another bishop of this Church to provide pastoral support to the couple, the Member of the Clergy involved and the congregation or worshipping community in order to fulfill the intention of this resolution that all couples have convenient and reasonable local congregational access to these rites; and be it further

Resolved, That the provision of Canon I.18.7 applies by extension to these liturgies, namely, “It shall be within the discretion of any Member of the Clergy of this Church to decline to solemnize or bless any marriage”; and be it further

Resolved, That the provisions of Canon I.19.3 regarding marriage after divorce apply equally to these liturgies; and be it further

Resolved, That bishops exercising ecclesiastical authority, or where appropriate ecclesiastical supervision, who hold a theological position that does not embrace marriage for same sex

couples, shall in the case of remarriage after divorce, invite another bishop of this Church to oversee the consent process and to receive any report of such Marriages, as provided in Canon I.19.3(c); and be it further

Resolved, That bishops continue the work of leading the Church in comprehensive engagement with these materials and continue to provide generous pastoral response to meet the needs of members of this Church; and be it further

Resolved, That this Church continue to honor theological diversity in regard to matters of human sexuality; and be it further

Resolved, That the 79th General Convention request the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget, and Finance to consider a budget allocation of \$100,000 for the implementation of this resolution; and be it further

Resolved, That the 79th General Convention direct the Secretary of General Convention and the Custodian of the Standard Book of Common Prayer, in consultation with the outgoing Chair of the Task Force on the Study of Marriage and the Chairs of the Legislative Committees to whom this legislation is referred, to finalize and arrange with Church Publishing for the publication (in English, Spanish, French, and Haitian Creole) of the material contained in “Liturgical Resources 2” as approved by the 79th General Convention; the General Convention Office to make these materials available electronically at no cost no later than the first Sunday of Advent 2018.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Austin, 2018* (New York: General Convention, 2018), pp. 659-660.