

**GENERAL CONVENTION OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH 2018
ARCHIVES' RESEARCH REPORT**

RESOLUTION NO.: 2018-A085
TITLE: Trial Use of Marriage Liturgies
PROPOSER: Task Force on the Study of Marriage
TOPIC: Book of Common Prayer

Directly Related: (Attached)

2015-A036 Amend Canon I.18 [Of the Solemnization of Holy Matrimony]
2015-A037 Appoint an Expanded Task Force on the Study of Marriage
2015-A054 Authorize Trial Use of Marriage and Blessing Rites in "Liturgical Resources I"
2012-A049 Authorize Liturgical Resources for Blessing Same-Sex Relationships
2012-D091 Refer a Resolution on Amending the Marriage Canons (Referred)

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

2012-A050 Create a Task Force on the Study of Marriage
2009-C056 Develop Liturgies for Blessings Unions and Provide Generous Pastoral Response
2003-C051 Consider Blessing Committed, Same-Gender Relationships
2000-D039 Acknowledge Relationships Other Than Marriage and Existence of Disagreement

Supplemental Documents: (Linked)

(*Blue Book*) Report to General Convention, [Task Force on the Study of Marriage](#), see pages 806-809.

In preparing this report, the Archives researched the resolutions in the Acts of Convention database for the period 1976 through 2015, 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 at 800-525-9329 before Convention or at Convention in the General Convention Secretariat.

A085 Trial Use of Marriage Liturgies

Proposer	Task Force on the Study of Marriage
Topic	Book of Common Prayer
Endorsed by	
Sponsored by	
Page numbers	Blue Book: p. N/A; Constitution & Canons: p. N/A
HiA / Leg. Cttee	/
Current Status	Resolution Filed
Version	Original (as filed)
Review Status	Not yet reviewed

RESOLUTION TEXT

- 1 *Resolved*, the House of _____ concurring, That the 79th General Convention, in accordance with Article X of the Constitution and Canons II.3.6, authorize for trial use as additions to The Book of Common Prayer (to be inserted following page 438) “The Witnessing and Blessing of a Marriage,” “The Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage 2,” “The Blessing of a Civil Marriage 2,” and “An Order for Marriage 2” (as revised and appended to the report of the Task Force on the Study of Marriage to the 79th General Convention), beginning the First Sunday of Advent 2018; and be it further,
 - 2 *Resolved*, That paragraph 1 of “Concerning the Service” regarding “The Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage” and “The Blessing of a Civil Marriage” (Book of Common Prayer page 422) be amended for trial use in accordance with Article X of the Constitution and Canon II.3.6 to read as follows:
 - 3 Christian marriage is a solemn and public covenant between ~~a man and a woman~~ *two people* in the presence of God. In The Episcopal Church it is required that one (1), at least, of the parties must be a baptized Christian; that the ceremony be attested by at least two (2) witnesses; and that the marriage conform to the laws of the State and the Canons of this Church. And be it further
 - 4 *Resolved*, That the following Preface for Marriage 2 be authorized for trial use as an addition to The Book of Common Prayer (to be inserted on page 349) in accordance with Article X of the Constitution and Canon II.3.6:
 - 5 Because in the marriage of two (2) people in faithful love, thou dost reveal unto us the joy and abundant life thou sharest with thy Son Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost. And be it further
 - 6 *Resolved*, That the following Preface for Marriage 2 be authorized for trial use as an addition to The Book of Common Prayer (to be inserted on page 381) in accordance with Article X of the Constitution and Canons II.3.6:
 - 7 Because in the marriage of two (2) people in faithful love, you reveal the joy and abundant life you share with your Son Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. And be it further
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8 *Resolved*, That the section “Other Sacramental Rites” in “An Outline of the Faith commonly called the Catechism” in The Book of Common Prayer (page 861) be amended for trial use in accordance with Article X of the Constitution and Canons II.3.6 to read as follows:

9 Q. What is Holy Matrimony?

10 A. Holy Matrimony is Christian marriage, in which *two (2) people* ~~the woman and man~~ enter into a life-long union, make their vows before God and the Church, and receive the grace and blessing of God to help them fulfill their vows.

11 *Q. What is required of those to be married?*

12 A. It is required of those to be married that at least one (1) member of the couple be baptized and that they have been instructed that Christian marriage is an unconditional, mutual, exclusive, faithful and lifelong commitment intended for the couple’s mutual joy, for the help and comfort given to each other in prosperity and adversity, and, when it is God’s will, for the gift and heritage of children and their nurture in the knowledge and love of God. And be it further

13 *Resolved*, That these additions and alterations to The Book of Common Prayer authorized for trial use by this Convention are understood to be for the period between the 79th and 80th General Conventions, with the option to 1) extend the period of trial use, 2) adopt on second reading, without amendment, these materials as additions/alterations to The Book of Common Prayer; or 3) take some other course of action as determined by the 80th General Convention; and be it further

14 *Resolved*, That these alterations and additions be published in “Liturgical Resources 2” (as appended to the report of the Task Force on the Study of Marriage); and be it further

15 *Resolved*, That bishops exercising ecclesiastical authority or, where appropriate, ecclesiastical supervision, will make provision for all couples asking to be married in this Church to have reasonable and convenient access to these trial liturgies; and be it further

16 *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

17 *Resolved*, That the provision of Canon I.18.7 applies by extension to these liturgies authorized for trial use, 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

18 *Resolved*, That the provisions of Canon I.19.3 regarding marriage after divorce apply equally to these liturgies authorized for trial use, in accordance with guidelines established by each diocese; and be it further

- 19 *Resolved*, That this Church continue to honor theological diversity in regard to matters of human sexuality; and that no bishop, priest, deacon or lay person should be coerced or penalized in any manner, nor suffer any canonical disabilities, as a result of his or her theological support for or objection to the 79th General Convention’s action pertaining to this resolution; and be it further
- 20 *Resolved*, That in accordance with Article X of the Constitution, notice of this resolution “be sent within six (6) months to the Secretary of the Convention of every Diocese, to be made known to the Diocesan Convention at its next meeting”; and be it further
- 21 *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, and French) 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.

EXPLANATION

For over forty (40) years The Episcopal Church has been discussing the place of same-sex couples in its common life. During this time, some dioceses and congregations gradually began offering liturgical blessings of the lifelong monogamous relationships of same-sex couples. In 2000, the General Convention adopted Resolution D039 (subsequently reaffirmed by successive General Conventions) expressing the Church’s understanding and expectation that marriage and other life-long committed relationships “will be characterized by fidelity, monogamy, mutual affection and respect, careful, honest communication, and the holy love which enables those in such relationships to see in each other the image of God.”

The 2012 General Convention authorized liturgical resources for “The Witnessing and Blessing of a Lifelong Covenant” (Resolution 2012-A049), and three (3) years later the 2015 General Convention authorized the trial use of two (2) liturgies for marriage, available for use by all couples (“The Witnessing and Blessing of a Marriage” and “The Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage 2”), as well as the continued use of “The Witnessing and Blessing of a Lifelong Covenant” (Resolution 2015-A054).

With the June 2015 United States Supreme Court decision permitting the civil marriage of same-sex couples anywhere in the United States, same-sex couples have been able to have their marriages solemnized in domestic dioceses of The Episcopal Church in conformity with both the laws of the State and the Canons of the Church (Canon I.18.1). “The Witnessing and Blessing of a Lifelong Covenant” allows the blessing of same-sex couples in civil jurisdictions where their marriage is not permitted by civil law, and authorization for use of this liturgy is not changed by these provisions for trial use of liturgies for marriage.

In a survey of U.S. dioceses in 2017, the Task Force on the Study of Marriage learned that ninety-three

(93) Bishops with jurisdiction authorized the trial use of the marriage liturgies. Seventy-three (73) of those bishops authorized their use with no conditions. Twenty (20) bishops authorized their use with some conditions. Of those twenty (20), twelve (12) required Vestry approvals, two (2) required Vestry approval and permission of the Bishop, one (1) required approval of the Bishop, two (2) required a parish discernment process and three (3) authorized only one of the available rites. Eight (8) bishops did not allow the trial use of the marriage liturgies. These liturgies have been widely used throughout the Church, and this resolution brings these liturgies before this Convention for continued trial use, with additional proposed revisions of The Book of Common Prayer [BCP].

This resolution authorizes additions to the Book of Common Prayer, including,

1. Two (2) liturgies for marriage available to all couples: “The Witnessing and Blessing of a Marriage” and “The Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage 2”
2. “The Blessing of a Civil Marriage 2”
3. “An Order for Marriage 2,” a flexible order of service similar to “An Order for Marriage” in the 1979 Book of Common Prayer (pp. 435-36).

These liturgical materials would be authorized for trial use in accordance with Article X of the Constitution of The Episcopal Church and Canon II.3.6. “Trial use” means that the Church is considering these for inclusion in The Book of Common Prayer. To be added to the Prayer Book, two (2) successive General Conventions must authorize the liturgies in identical form. As additions to the Prayer Book, these liturgies would not replace the current BCP liturgies “The Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage,” “The Blessing of a Civil Marriage,” and “An Order for Marriage.”

Canon II. 3.6(a) allows General Convention to specify any special terms or conditions under which such trial use shall be carried out. This resolution requires bishops exercising ecclesiastical authority (or, where appropriate, ecclesiastical supervision) to make provision for all couples asking to be married in this Church to have reasonable and convenient access to these trial liturgies.

During the period of trial use, the liturgies and other revised materials would be published in “Liturgical Resources 2,” but they would not appear in new printings of The Book of Common Prayer. The 80th General Convention, in 2021, could 1) extend the period of trial use, 2) adopt these additions and alterations, at which time they would be added to future printings of the BCP or 3) determine some other course of action.

In addition to the liturgies to be added to The Book of Common Prayer, this resolution would change one (1) rubric and add one (1) liturgical text in order to recognize marriage between same-sex couples. The description of marriage in the section “Concerning the Service” (BCP p. 422) would be revised to state that marriage is a covenant between “two people” rather than between “a man and a woman.” An additional Proper Preface for use at a nuptial Eucharist is proposed for both Rite I and Rite II.

The Catechism would also be revised to state that Christian marriage involves “two people,” rather than “the man and the woman.” A second question about marriage would be added (just as a second question about Confirmation explains the requirements of those to be confirmed) to indicate the Canonical requirements for marriage, including instruction in the purposes of Christian marriage.

This resolution provides guidance for implementing trial use. Given that we are now considering revision of The Book of Common Prayer, it is important as ever that bishops provide generous pastoral response to meet the needs of members of the Church and that they lead the Church in engaging with these materials. The provisions acknowledging that any member of the clergy may decline to solemnize or bless a marriage (Canon I.18.7) and that the provisions regarding marriage after divorce (Canon I.19.3) apply to the use of the trial liturgies were also in the 2015 Resolution, along with an assurance that no one in the Church, lay person, bishop, priest, or deacon, shall suffer any coercion or penalty because of theological support for or opposition to the blessing or marriage of same-sex couples.

The final resolve provides the mechanism for publishing and making this material available to the Church.



Resolution Number: 2015-A036
Title: Amend Canon I.18 [Of the Solemnization of Holy Matrimony]
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That Canon I.18 is hereby amended to read as follows:

~~CANON 18: Of the Solemnization of Holy Matrimony~~

~~Canon 18: Of the Celebration and Blessing of Marriage~~

~~Sec. 1. Every Member of the Clergy of this Church shall conform to the laws of the State governing the creation of the civil status of marriage, and also to the laws of this Church governing these canons concerning the solemnization of marriage Holy Matrimony. Members of the Clergy may solemnize a marriage using any of the liturgical forms authorized by this Church.~~

~~Sec. 2. Before solemnizing a marriage the Member of the Clergy shall have ascertained:~~

~~(a) That both parties have the right to contract a marriage according to the laws of the State.~~

~~(b) That both parties understand that Holy Matrimony is a physical and spiritual union of a man and a woman, entered into within the community of faith, by mutual consent of heart, mind, and will, and with intent that it be lifelong.~~

~~(c) That both parties freely and knowingly consent to such marriage, without fraud, coercion, mistake as to identity of a partner, or mental reservation.~~

~~(d) That at least one of the parties has received Holy Baptism.~~

~~(e) That both parties have been instructed as to the nature, meaning, and purpose of Holy Matrimony by the Member of the Clergy, or that they have both received such instruction from persons known by the Member of the Clergy to be competent and responsible.~~

~~Sec. 2. The couple shall notify the Member of the Clergy of their intent to marry at least thirty days prior to the solemnization; Provided, that if one of the parties is a member of the Congregation of the Member of the Clergy, or both parties can furnish satisfactory evidence of the need for shortening the time, this requirement can be waived for weighty cause; in which case the Member of the Clergy shall immediately report this action in writing to the Bishop.~~

~~Sec. 3. No Member of the Clergy of this Church shall solemnize any marriage unless the following procedures are complied with:~~

~~(a) The intention of the parties to contract marriage shall have been signified to the Member of the Clergy at least thirty days before the service of solemnization; Provided, that for weighty cause, this requirement may be dispensed with if one of the parties is a member of the Congregation of the Member of the Clergy, or can furnish satisfactory evidence of responsibility. In case the thirty days' notice is waived, the Member of the Clergy shall report such action in writing to the Bishop immediately.~~

~~(b) There shall be present at least two witnesses to the solemnization of marriage.~~

~~(c) The Member of the Clergy shall record in the proper register the date and place of the marriage, the names of the parties and their parents, the age of the parties, their residences, and their Church status; the witnesses and the Member of the Clergy shall sign the record.~~

~~(d) The Member of the Clergy shall have required that the parties sign the following declaration:~~

~~(e) "We, A.B. and C.D., desiring to receive the blessing of Holy Matrimony in the Church, do solemnly declare that we hold marriage to be a lifelong union of husband and wife as it is set forth in the Book of Common Prayer.~~

~~(f) "We believe that the union of husband and wife, in heart, body, and mind, is intended by God for their mutual joy; for the help and comfort given one another in prosperity and adversity; and, when it is God's will, for the procreation of children and their nurture in the knowledge and love of the Lord.~~

~~(g) "And we do engage ourselves, so far as in us lies, to make our utmost effort to establish this relationship and to seek God's help thereto."~~

Sec. 3. Prior to the solemnization, the Member of the Clergy shall determine:

(a) that both parties have the right to marry according to the laws of the State and consent to do so freely, without fraud, coercion, mistake as to the identity of either, or mental reservation; and

(b) that at least one of the parties is baptized; and

(c) that both parties have been instructed by the Member of the Clergy, or a person known by the Member of the Clergy to be competent and responsible, in the nature, purpose, and meaning, as well as the rights, duties and responsibilities of marriage.

Sec. 4. Prior to the solemnization, the parties shall sign the following Declaration of Intention:

We understand the teaching of the church that God's purpose for our marriage is for our mutual joy, for the help and comfort we will give to each other in prosperity and adversity, and, when it is God's will, for the gift and heritage of children and their nurture in the knowledge and love of God. We also understand that our marriage is to be unconditional, mutual, exclusive, faithful, and lifelong; and we engage to make the utmost effort to accept these gifts and fulfill these duties, with the help of God and the support of our community.

Sec. 5. At least two witnesses shall be present at the solemnization, and together with the Member of the Clergy and the parties, sign the record of the solemnization in the proper register; which record shall include the date and place of the solemnization, the names of the witnesses, the parties and their parents, the age of the parties, Church status, and residence(s).

Sec. 6. A bishop or priest may pronounce a blessing upon a civil marriage using any of the liturgical forms authorized by this Church.

~~Sec. 4~~*Sec. 7. 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 this canon shall become effective on the First Sunday of Advent, 2015.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Salt Lake City, 2015* (New York: General Convention, 2015), pp. 781-783.



Resolution Number: 2015-A037
Title: Appoint an Expanded Task Force on the Study of Marriage
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 78th General Convention requests dioceses and parishes use the study materials on marriage provided in the last triennium by the Task Force on the Study of Marriage, namely the “Dearly Beloved” toolkit and the appended essays in their Blue Book report to this Convention; and be it further

Resolved, That the 78th General Convention directs the Presiding Bishop and President of the House of Deputies to appoint jointly an expanded Task Force on the Study of Marriage to continue this work, consisting of not more than 15 people, including theologians, ethicists, pastors, liturgists, and educators, who represent the cultural and theological diversity in the Church; membership should include some of the Task Force on the Study of Marriage appointed in 2012, some from dioceses outside the United States, and young adults; and be it further

Resolved, That the Task Force explore further those contemporary trends and norms identified by the Task Force on the Study of Marriage in the previous triennium, specifically regarding those who choose to remain single; unmarried persons in intimate relationships; couples who cohabitate either in preparation for, or as an alternative to, marriage; couples who desire a blessing from the Church but not marriage; parenting by single or and/or unmarried persons; differing forms of family and household such as those including same-sex parenting, adoption, and racial diversity; and differences in marriage patterns between ethnic and racial groups; and be it further

Resolved, That the Task Force consult with (i) individuals and couples within these groups about their experience of faith and church life; and (ii) the results of diocesan and parochial study of "Dearly Beloved" toolkit; and be it further

Resolved, That the Task Force explore biblical, theological, moral, liturgical, cultural, and pastoral perspectives on these matters, and develop written materials about them which represent the spectrum of understanding in our Church and which include responses from theologians, ethicists, pastors, liturgists, social scientists, and educators who are not members of the expanded Task Force, and whose perspectives represent the spectrum of understandings on these matters in our Church; and be it further

Resolved, That the Task Force study and monitor, in consultation with the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music, the impact of same-sex marriage and rites of blessing on our Church; the continuing debate about clergy acting as agents of the state in officiating at marriages; and any other matters related to marriage by action of or referral by this Convention; and be it further

Resolved, That the Task Force report and make recommendations to the 79th General Convention; and be it further

Resolved, That the Task Force provide educational and pastoral resources for congregational use on these matters that represents the spectrum of understandings on these matters in our Church; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention request the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget and Finance to consider a budget allocation of \$90,000 for the implementation of this resolution.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Salt Lake City, 2015* (New York: General Convention, 2015), pp. 702-704.



Resolution Number: 2015-A054
Title: Authorize Trial Use of Marriage and Blessing Rites in "Liturgical Resources I"
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 78th General Convention commend “**Liturgical Resources I: I Will Bless You and You Will Be a Blessing, Revised and Expanded 2015,**” as found in the Blue Book, Liturgy Supplemental Materials: Appendices of the Report of the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music (BBLSM), pp. 2-151 with the following revisions:

BBLSM p. 84: In The Commitment, change the rubric to read “Each member of the couple, in turn, takes the right hand of the other and says”

BBLSM p.84: After “I N., give myself to you, N.” add “, and take you to myself.”

BBLSM p. 85: At the Pronouncement, change the rubric to read “The Presider joins the right hands and says”

BBLSM p. 87: In Concerning the Service, change the second paragraph to read “At least one of the couple must be a baptized Christian, and the marriage shall conform to the laws of the state and canons of this church.”

BBLSM p. 88: Under Gathering, change the rubric to read “The couple joins the assembly.”

BBLSM p. 89: Change “In marriage according to the laws of the state [or civil jurisdiction] of X” to “In marriage [according to the laws of the state or civil jurisdiction of X]”

BBLSM p. 89: Change “Solemnize their marriage according to the laws of the state [or civil jurisdiction] of X” to “are married [according to the laws of the state or civil jurisdiction of X]”

BBLSM p.94: After “I N., give myself to you, N.” add “, and take you to myself.”

BBLSM p. 95: At the Pronouncement, change the rubric to read “The Presider joins the right hands of the couple and says”

BBLSM p. 95: Replace “I pronounce that they are married according to the laws of the state [or civil jurisdiction] of X” to “I pronounce that they are married [according to the laws of the state or civil jurisdiction of X]”

BBLSM p. 100: At The Marriage, change the rubric to read “Each member of the couple, in turn, takes the right hand of the other and says” for study and use in congregations and dioceses of The Episcopal Church; and be it further

Resolved, That the 78th General Convention authorize for use “**The Witnessing and Blessing of a Lifelong Covenant**” from “**Liturgical Resources I: I Will Bless You and You Will Be a Blessing, Revised and Expanded 2015,**” (as found in Supplemental Materials: Appendices of the Report of the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music, pp. 77-86, (as amended)),” beginning the First Sunday of Advent 2015; under the direction and with the permission of the bishop exercising ecclesiastical authority; and be it further

Resolved, That the 78th General Convention authorize for 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,**” from “**Liturgical Resources I: I Will Bless You and You Will Be a Blessing, Revised and Expanded 2015,**” (as found in Supplemental

Materials: Appendices of the Report of the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music, pp. 87-105) beginning the First Sunday of Advent 2015. Bishops exercising ecclesiastical authority or, where appropriate, ecclesiastical supervision, will make provision for all couples asking to be married in this Church to have access to these liturgies. Trial use is only to be available under the direction and with the permission of the Diocesan Bishop; and be it further

Resolved, **That bishops may continue to provide generous pastoral response to meet the needs of members of this Church; and be it further**

Resolved, **That the provision of Canon I.18.4 applies by extension to “Liturgical Resources I: I Will Bless You and You Will Be a Blessing, Revised and Expanded 2015,” namely, “It shall be within the discretion of any Member of the Clergy of this Church to decline to” preside at any rite contained herein; and be it further**

Resolved, **That the provisions of Canon I.19.3 regarding marriage after divorce apply equally to all the rites of “Liturgical Resources I: I Will Bless You and You Will Be a Blessing, Revised and Expanded 2015,” in accordance with guidelines established by each diocese; and be it further**

Resolved, **That this convention honor the theological diversity of this Church in regard to matters of human sexuality; and that no bishop, priest, deacon or lay person should be coerced or penalized in any manner, nor suffer any canonical disabilities, as a result of his or her theological objection to or support for the 78th General Convention’s action contained in this resolution; and be it further**

Resolved, **That the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music continue to monitor the use of this material and report to the 79th General Convention; and be it further**

Resolved, **That the 78th 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 Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music and the Chairs of the Legislative Committees to whom this legislation is referred, to finalize and arrange for the publication with Church Publishing of the material (in English and Spanish) contained in “Liturgical Resources 1: I Will Bless You and You Will Be a Blessing, Revised and Expanded 2015” as approved by the 78th General Convention, no later than the first Sunday of Advent 2015, these materials to be available electronically at no cost.**

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Salt Lake City, 2015* (New York: General Convention, 2015), pp. 778-781.



Resolution Number: 2012-A049
Title: Authorize Liturgical Resources for Blessing Same-Sex Relationships
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 77th General Convention commend "Liturgical Resources I: I Will Bless You and You Will Be a Blessing" for study and use in congregations and dioceses of The Episcopal Church, with the following revisions:

Throughout "I Will Bless You and You Will Be a Blessing" change "same-gender" to "same-sex";

Blue Book p. 184: change "Resources for Blessing Same-Gender Relationships" to "Resources for The Witnessing and Blessing of a Lifelong Covenant in a same-sex relationship"

Blue Book p. 240: Add rubric after first rubric, stating: "At least one of the couple must be a baptized Christian."

Blue Book p. 240: In paragraph 2, line 1, delete "at least one of whom is baptized,"

Blue Book p. 241: In Presider's address to the assembly, delete "come what may," (paragraph 1, line 9)

Blue Book pp. 241-242: In Presider's address to the assembly, delete all of paragraph 2 ("Ahead of them...calls us all to share.")

Blue Book p. 242: In Presider's address to the assembly, change "let us pray, then," (paragraph 3, line 1) to "Therefore, in the name of Christ, let us pray"

Blue Book p. 245: After the bidding for peace in their home and love in their family, add the following bidding: "For the grace, when they hurt each other, to recognize and acknowledge their fault, and to seek each other's forgiveness and yours: Lord, in your mercy (or Lord, in your goodness) Hear our prayer."

Blue Book p. 246: Change rubric that begins "After a time of silence" to the following: "The leader may add one or more of the following biddings"

Blue Book p. 247: In Commitment (both forms) line 7, change "I will honor and keep you" to "I will honor and love you"

Blue Book p. 248: In first form of blessing rings, change line 2 to "as signs of the enduring covenant"

Blue Book p. 248: In Blessing of the Couple, add rubric between first and second paragraphs: "The Presider continues with one of the following"

Blue Book p. 248: In Blessing of the Couple, add third paragraph after the "Amen": "or this / God, the holy and undivided Trinity, bless, preserve, and keep you, and mercifully grant you rich and boundless grace, that you may please God in body and soul. God make you a sign of the loving-kindness and steadfast fidelity manifest in the life, death, and resurrection of our Savior, and bring you at last to the delight of the heavenly banquet, where he lives and reigns for ever and ever. Amen."

Blue Book p. 257: In paragraph under E. Vocation, change "1 Samuel 18" to "1 Samuel 3"; and be it further

Resolved, That the 77th General Convention authorize for provisional use "The Witnessing and Blessing of a Lifelong Covenant" from "Liturgical Resources I: I Will Bless You and

You Will Be a Blessing" beginning the First Sunday of Advent 2012, under the direction and subject to the permission of the bishop exercising ecclesiastical authority; and be it further
Resolved, That bishops, particularly those in dioceses within civil jurisdictions where same-sex marriage, civil unions, or domestic partnerships are legal, may provide generous pastoral response to meet the needs of members of this Church; and be it further
Resolved, That bishops may authorize adaptation of these materials to meet the needs of members of this Church; and be it further
Resolved, That the provision of Canon I.18.4 applies by extension to “Theological Resources for Blessing Same-Sex Relationships,” namely, “It shall be within the discretion of any Member of the Clergy of this Church to decline to [preside at any rite of blessing defined herein]”; and be it further
Resolved, That this convention honor the theological diversity of this church in regard to matters of human sexuality, and that no bishop, priest, deacon or lay person should be coerced or penalized in any manner, nor suffer any canonical disabilities, as a result of his or her conscientious objection to or support for the 77th General Convention’s action with regard to the Blessing of Same-Sex Relationships; and be it further
Resolved, That the theological resource for the blessing of a life-long covenant be further developed by the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music over the 2013-2015 triennium with specific attention to further engagement with scripture and the relevant categories and sources of systematic theology (e.g., creation, sin, grace, salvation, redemption, human nature); and be it further
Resolved, That the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music include the work of diverse theological perspectives in the further development of the theological resource; and be it further
Resolved, That the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music develop an open process to review "I Will Bless You and You Will Be a Blessing," inviting responses from provinces, dioceses, congregations, and individuals from throughout The Episcopal Church and the Anglican Communion, and from our ecumenical partners, and report to the 78th General Convention.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Indianapolis, 2012* (New York: General Convention, 2012), pp. 565-567.



Resolution Number: 2012-D091
Title: Refer a Resolution on Amending the Marriage Canons
Legislative Action Taken: Referred
Final Text:

Resolved, That Canon I.18.2(b) be amended to read as follows:

Sec. 2(b) That both parties understand that Holy Matrimony is a physical and spiritual union of ~~a man and a woman~~two people, entered into within the community of faith, by mutual consent of heart, mind, and will, and with intent that it be lifelong; and be it further

Resolved, That Canon I.18.3(e-f) be amended to read as follows:

Sec. 3(e) “We, A.B. and C.D., desiring to receive the blessing of Holy Matrimony in the Church, do solemnly declare that we hold marriage to be a lifelong union of husband and wife two persons as it is set forth in the Book of Common Prayer.

Sec. 3(f) “We believe that the union of husband and wife two persons, in heart, body, and mind, is intended by God for their mutual joy; for the help and comfort given one another in prosperity and adversity; and, when it is God s will, for the procreation of children and their nurture in the knowledge and love of the Lord.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Indianapolis, 2012* (New York: General Convention, 2012), p. 729.