

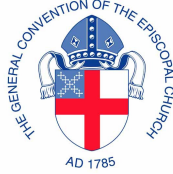
**The Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music**  
**Church-Wide Consultation in Response to General Convention Resolution C056**  
**Atlanta, March 18 and 19, 2011**  
**Meeting Materials**

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## THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH THE GENERAL CONVENTION

BONNIE ANDERSON, D.D.  
PRESIDENT OF THE HOUSE OF DEPUTIES

March 18, 2011

Dear Deputies,

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the church-wide consultation, held in response to General Convention Resolution C056. As you know, this important event is hosted by the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music and will provide an unprecedented opportunity for members of the House of Deputies to meet together for the purposes of information sharing and theological reflection outside of the context of the General Convention. It is my expectation that each of us present will take the experience of this consultation back to our diocese and share our experiences with our deputation and, in turn, engage with them in meaningful, Christ-centered theological reflection as we will do at this consultation.

The House of Deputies is experienced at listening to each other in a “legislative” setting. But this church-wide consultation will provide a new context for us. We will be able to use our attentiveness to each other in a new and different way. To this conversation, we bring the unique voices and insight of the laity and the clergy from dioceses all across God’s Church.

Together at this event we are asked to listen deeply and carefully to each other. There is no need or expectation to come to any agreements, there will be no votes and no debate, only listening and reflecting on what we hear. We will ask God to give us open hearts to hear and to enjoy each other. As always, when we are together in the House of Deputies, at this consultation we will watch for, hope for, pray for and humbly expect the presence of the Holy Spirit to guide and support us.

I look forward to seeing you, to listening with and to you and to engaging in theological reflection with you. I am grateful for your many, many gifts and for your faithfulness and love for God and God’s Church.

Peace,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bonnie Anderson".

Bonnie Anderson, D.D.  
President, The House of Deputies



THE BLESSINGS PROJECT

The Episcopal Church  
Standing Commission  
on Liturgy and Music

**Church-Wide Consultation  
on 2009 General Convention Resolution C056  
March 18–19, 2011  
Atlanta**

**Goals  
INFORM – ENGAGE – EQUIP**

**1. INFORM the Deputies about the work of the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music in response to Resolution C056.**

In plenary sessions, we will:

- Review the legislative history of Resolution C056;
- Review relevant legislation from previous General Conventions;
- Learn about the work that SCLM and its task groups have accomplished on this project;
- Learn about the processes by which the SCLM is inviting participation from throughout the Episcopal Church and theological reflection from throughout the Anglican Communion.

**2. ENGAGE the Deputies in theological reflection as a Christian community.**

In small groups, we will:

- Reflect on participants' experiences of same-gender relationships and blessings of those relationships;
- Reflect on the resources being developed;
- Provide feedback to the SCLM on these resources, to inform the SCLM and its task groups as they complete their work;

**3. EQUIP the Deputies to report to their deputations and engage them in ongoing theological reflection.**

Through participation in this consultation, Deputies will:

- Be able to explain the work SCLM has done on C-056, in order to prepare to receive the SCLM report at the 2012 General Convention;
- Consider models for engaging their deputation in theological reflection on the SCLM work.



THE BLESSINGS PROJECT

The Episcopal Church  
Standing Commission  
on Liturgy and Music

**Church-Wide Consultation  
on 2009 General Convention Resolution C056  
March 18–19, 2011  
Atlanta**

## **Our Covenant for Conversation**

As we gather in the name of Christ to share our thoughts, feelings, and ideas, we accept this Covenant to guide our conversation along God's path of love. We will:

- Speak only for ourselves (using “I” statements)
- Take responsibility for our own thoughts and feelings
- Remember our baptismal vow to *respect the dignity of every human being*
- Seek and acknowledge common ground
- Honor confidentiality unless permission to share is explicitly given
- Practice “sacred listening” by:
  - ❖ Listening for God in the experience of others
  - ❖ Accepting those experiences as valid for the speakers
  - ❖ Searching for strengths in the other's position
  - ❖ Avoiding interruptions and argument
  - ❖ Avoiding applause or other reactions to speakers
  - ❖ Each person gets to speak before others speak again
  - ❖ If a particular group or person is going to be discussed, some of them should be present

From the Episcopal Diocese of Vermont. Adapted from *Good News: A Congregational Resource for Reconciliation* (Charleston) and *Intimate Human Relationships: Resources for Conversation in the Congregations and Deaneries of the Episcopal Diocese of Vermont*.



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The Episcopal Church  
Standing Commission  
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**Church-Wide Consultation  
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## **Agenda**

### **Friday, March 18**

#### **2:00–3:00 p.m. Plenary I**

Gather by Ruth Meyers, Chair of the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music

Opening Worship

Welcome from Bonnie Anderson, President of the House of Deputies

Overview of History and Legislative Process

Getting to Know Us

Theological Reflection

#### **3:30–4:30 p.m. Small Groups A**

Lived Experience with Blessings: Conversation and Theological Reflection

#### **4:45–6:00 p.m. Plenary II**

Report-Back from Small Groups

Reflection on Liturgy

Dinner Plan

Evensong

#### **6:30–7:45 p.m. Working Dinner**

#### **8:00–9:00 p.m. Small Groups B**

Conversation about Liturgy

Compline

(Friday continues on back)

## **9:00 p.m. Reception**

### **Reception Hosts:**

The Rt. Rev. Neil Alexander, Bishop, Diocese of Atlanta  
The Very Rev. Samuel G. Candler, Dean, Cathedral of St. Philip  
The Rev. Geoffrey Hoare, Rector, All Saints, Atlanta  
The Rev. Dan Matthews, Rector St. Luke's, Atlanta  
The Rev. William McC. Thigpen, Rector, St. Bartholomew's, Atlanta

## **Saturday, March 19**

### **8:30–9:30 a.m. Plenary III**

**Morning Prayer**

**Greetings and Recap**

**Information about Pastoral and Teaching Resources**

### **10:00–10:45 a.m. Small Groups C**

**Focus on Pastoral and Teaching Resources**

### **11:00 a.m.–Noon Plenary IV**

**Introduction to Canonical and Legal Considerations**

**Report-Back from Small Groups**

**Taking the Meeting Home**

**Closing Remarks**

**Closing Worship**

### **Noon Deputies Adjourn/Go in Peace**



Church-Wide Consultation  
on 2009 General Convention Resolution C056  
March 18–19, 2011  
Atlanta

THE BLESSINGS PROJECT

The Episcopal Church  
Standing Commission  
on Liturgy and Music

2009 General Convention  
Resolution C056

13 - Prayer Book, Liturgy and Church Music: HB

C056

TOPIC/TITLE: Liturgy: Liturgies for Blessings

PROPOSER: Diocese of Missouri

C&C PAGE:

BB PAGE:

1 *Resolved*, the House of Deputies concurring, That the 76th General Convention acknowledge the  
2 changing circumstances in the United States and in other nations, as legislation authorizing or  
3 forbidding marriage, civil unions or domestic partnerships for gay and lesbian persons is passed  
4 in various civil jurisdictions that call forth a renewed pastoral response from this Church, and for  
5 an open process for the consideration of theological and liturgical resources for the blessing of  
6 same gender relationships; and be it further

7  
8 *Resolved*, That the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music, in consultation with the House  
9 of Bishops, collect and develop theological and liturgical resources, and report to the 77th  
10 General Convention; and be it further

11  
12 *Resolved*, That the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music, in consultation with the House  
13 of Bishops, devise an open process for the conduct of its work inviting participation from  
14 provinces, dioceses, congregations, and individuals who are engaged in such theological work,  
15 and inviting theological reflection from throughout the Anglican Communion; and be it further

16  
17 *Resolved*, That bishops, particularly those in dioceses within civil jurisdictions where same-  
18 gender marriage, civil unions, or domestic partnerships are legal, may provide generous pastoral  
19 response to meet the needs of members of this Church; and be it further

20  
21 *Resolved*, That this Convention honor the theological diversity of this Church in regard to  
22 matters of human sexuality; and be it further

23  
24 *Resolved*, That the members of this Church be encouraged to engage in this effort.



**Church-Wide Consultation  
on 2009 General Convention Resolution C056  
March 18–19, 2011  
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**THE BLESSINGS PROJECT**

The Episcopal Church  
Standing Commission  
on Liturgy and Music

**C056 Work Process**

- ☑ Dec. 2009: Letter to diocesan bishops asking what provisions they have made for pastoral response and requesting theological and liturgical resources they are commending to their clergy (20 responses received as of September 1, 2010)
- ☑ Winter–Spring 2010: Request to diocesan chancellors for information about legal status of civil unions, domestic partnerships, and same-sex marriage
- ☑ Mar. 2010: SCLM meeting
  - ◆ Work with the Rev. Dr. Jay Johnson, theologian, to develop theological principles
  - ◆ Approve process for collecting and developing theological and liturgical resources
- ☑ Spring and Summer 2010: Create area Task Groups
  - ◆ Liturgical Resources  
Chair: The Rev. Dr. Pat Malloy (Bethlehem, III)
  - ◆ Theological Resources  
Chair: The Rev. Dr. Jay Johnson (California, VIII)
  - ◆ Pastoral and Teaching Resources  
Chairs: The Rev. Cn. Thaddeus Bennett (Vermont, I)  
The Rev. Susan Russell (Los Angeles, VIII)
- ☑ Summer and Fall 2010: Create final area Task Group
  - ◆ Canonical and Legal Considerations  
Chair: Thomas Little, Esq. (Vermont, I)
- ☑ Summer 2010: Create avenues for electronic discussion and feedback, including blog:  
<http://liturgyandmusic.wordpress.com/>
- ☑ July 7–10, 2010: First meeting of Liturgical Resources Task Group and Pastoral and Teaching Resources Task Group
- ☑ Sept. 2010: First meeting of Theological Resources Task Group
- ☑ Sept. 18, 2010: Consultation at House of Bishops meeting
- ☑ Oct. 19, 2010: SCLM hearing with representatives of dioceses of Province I (Concord, NH) (Standing Commission on Constitution and Canons member also attending)



- ☒ Nov 29–Dec 2, 2010: All task groups meet
- ☒ March 2011: Meeting with International Anglican Liturgical Consultation Steering Committee
- ☒ Mar. 18–19, 2011: SCLM church-wide consultation on Resolution C056  
(one clergy deputy and one lay deputy from each diocese)
- ☐ May 31–June 2, 2011: All task groups meet
- ☐ Aug. 2011: International Anglican Liturgical Consultation meeting
- ☐ Aug. 15–18, 2011: All task groups meet
- ☐ Sept. 15, 2011: Deadline for completion of task group work
- ☐ Oct. 11-15, 2011: Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music meets; final approval of report for General Convention 2012
- ☐ Fall 2011 through Spring 2012: Major presentation at each Provincial Synod meeting
- ☐ July 5-12, 2012: General Convention



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The Episcopal Church  
Standing Commission  
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**Church-Wide Consultation  
on 2009 General Convention Resolution C056  
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**A Review of  
General Convention Legislation  
1976–2009**

**Introduction**

For over 30 years, the Episcopal Church has been deliberating about the place of gay men and lesbians in the life of the church. The legislative history here shows the development of this deliberation, with successive conventions acknowledging the work of their predecessors and reaching new decisions. A much fuller history is presented in the document *To Set Our Hope on Christ*; a link to this document is found at the end of this summary.

**1976-A069: Recognize the Equal Claims of Homosexuals**

*Resolved*, the House of Bishops concurring, That it is the sense of this General Convention that homosexual persons are children of God who have a full and equal claim with all other persons upon the love, acceptance, and pastoral concern and care of the Church.

**1988-D120: Urge Local Discussion and Report on Human Sexuality**

*Resolved*, the House of Deputies concurring, That this 69th General Convention affirm that the Biblical and traditional teaching on chastity and fidelity in personal relationships is a response to, and an expression of, God's love for each one of us; and that all Christians are called to be exemplary in all spheres of morality, including sexual morality; and that holiness in life is particularly required of Christian leaders. In this context; and be it further

*Resolved*, That this Convention, responsive to the call of the Standing Commission on Human Affairs and Health "to find a non-judgmental occasion to listen and talk," and in the spirit of the Presiding Bishop's statement that "there will be no outcasts in this Church," strongly urge each diocese and congregation to provide opportunities for open dialogue on human sexuality, in which we, as members of this Church, both heterosexual and homosexual, may study, pray, listen to and share our convictions and concerns, our search for stable, loving and committed relationships, and our journey toward wholeness and holiness...

**1991-A104: Affirm the Church's Teaching on Sexual Expression, Commission Congregational Dialogue, and Direct Bishops to Prepare a Pastoral Teaching**

*Resolved*, the House of Deputies concurring, That the 70th General Convention of the Episcopal Church affirms that the teaching of the Episcopal Church is that physical sexual expression is appropriate only within the lifelong monogamous "union of husband and wife in heart, body, and mind" "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” as set forth in the Book of Common Prayer; and be it further

*Resolved*, That this Church continues to work to reconcile the discontinuity between this teaching and the experience of many members of this body...

#### **1994-C042: Prepare Report Considering Rites for Same-Sex Commitments**

*Resolved*, the House of Deputies concurring, That the 71st General Convention direct the Standing Liturgical Commission and the Theology Committee of the House of Bishops to prepare and present to the 72nd General Convention, as part of the Church's ongoing dialogue on human sexuality, a report addressing the theological foundations and pastoral considerations involved in the development of rites honoring love and commitment between persons of the same sex; and be it further

*Resolved*, That no rites for the honoring of love and commitment between persons of the same sex be developed unless and until the preparation of such rites has been authorized by the General Convention...

#### **1997-C003: Affirm Traditional Marriage and Request Study of Same-Sex Relationships**

*Resolved*, That this 72nd General Convention affirm the sacredness of Christian marriage between one man and one woman with intent of life-long relationship; and be it further

*Resolved*, That this Convention direct the Standing Liturgical Commission to continue its study of theological aspects of committed relationships of same-sex couples, and to issue a full report including recommendations of future steps for the resolution of issues related to such committed relationships no later than November 1999 for consideration at the 73rd General Convention.

#### **2000-D039: Acknowledge Relationships Other Than Marriage and Existence of Disagreement on the Church's Teaching**

...

*Resolved*, That we acknowledge that while the issues of human sexuality are not yet resolved, there are currently couples in the Body of Christ and in this Church who are living in marriage and couples in the Body of Christ and in this Church who are living in other life-long committed relationships; and be it further

*Resolved*, That we expect such 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; and be it further

*Resolved*, That we denounce promiscuity, exploitation, and abusiveness in the relationships of any of our members; and be it further

*Resolved*, That this Church intends to hold all its members accountable to these values, and will provide for them the prayerful support, encouragement, and pastoral care necessary to live faithfully by them; and be it further

*Resolved*, That we acknowledge that some, acting in good conscience, who disagree with the traditional teaching of the Church on human sexuality, will act in contradiction to that position; and be it further

*Resolved*, That in continuity with previous actions of the General Convention of this Church, and in response to the call for dialogue by the Lambeth Conference, we affirm that those on various sides of controversial issues have a place in the Church, and we reaffirm the imperative to promote conversation between persons of differing experiences and perspectives, while acknowledging the Church's teaching on the sanctity of marriage.

### **2003-C051: Consider Blessing Committed, Same-Gender Relationships**

*Resolved*, That the 74th General Convention affirm the following:

1. ...
2. That we reaffirm Resolution A069 of the 65th General Convention (1976) that "homosexual persons are children of God who have a full and equal claim with all other persons upon the love, acceptance, and pastoral concern and care of the Church."
3. That, in our understanding of homosexual persons, differences exist among us about how best to care pastorally for those who intend to live in monogamous, non-celibate unions; and what is, or should be, required, permitted, or prohibited by the doctrine, discipline, and worship of The Episcopal Church concerning the blessing of the same.
4. That we reaffirm Resolution D039 of the 73rd General Convention (2000), that "We expect such 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," and that such relationships exist throughout the church.
5. That we recognize that local faith communities are operating within the bounds of our common life as they explore and experience liturgies celebrating and blessing same-sex unions.
6. That we commit ourselves, and call our church, in the spirit of Resolution A104 of the 70th General Convention (1991), to continued prayer, study, and discernment on the pastoral care for gay and lesbian persons, to include the compilation and development by a special commission organized and appointed by the Presiding Bishop, of resources to facilitate as wide a conversation of discernment as possible throughout the church.
7. That our baptism into Jesus Christ is inseparable from our communion with one another, and we commit ourselves to that communion despite our diversity of opinion and, among dioceses, a diversity of pastoral practice with the gay men and lesbians among us.

...

### **2009-D025: Commitment and Witness to Anglican Communion**

...

*Resolved*, That the 76th General Convention affirm the value of "listening to the experience of homosexual persons," as called for by the Lambeth Conferences of 1978, 1988, and 1998, and acknowledge that through our own listening the General Convention has come to recognize that the baptized membership of The Episcopal Church includes same-sex couples living in lifelong committed relationships "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" (2000-D039); and be it further

*Resolved*, That the 76th General Convention recognize that gay and lesbian persons who are part of such relationships have responded to God's call and have exercised various ministries in and on behalf of God's One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church and are currently doing so in our midst; and be it further

*Resolved*, That the 76th General Convention affirm that God has called and may call such individuals, to any ordained ministry in The Episcopal Church, and that God's call to the ordained ministry in

The Episcopal Church is a mystery which the Church attempts to discern for all people through our discernment processes acting in accordance with the Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church; and be it further

*Resolved*, That the 76th General Convention acknowledge that members of The Episcopal Church as of the Anglican Communion, based on careful study of the Holy Scriptures, and in light of tradition and reason, are not of one mind, and Christians of good conscience disagree about some of these matters.

## **2009-C056: Liturgy: Liturgies for Blessings**

*Resolved*, the House of Deputies concurring, That the 76th General Convention acknowledge the changing circumstances in the United States and in other nations, as legislation authorizing or forbidding marriage, civil unions or domestic partnerships for gay and lesbian persons is passed in various civil jurisdictions that call forth a renewed pastoral response from this Church, and for an open process for the consideration of theological and liturgical resources for the blessing of same gender relationships; and be it further

*Resolved*, That the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music, in consultation with the House of Bishops, collect and develop theological and liturgical resources, and report to the 77th General Convention; and be it further

*Resolved*, That the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music, in consultation with the House of Bishops, devise an open process for the conduct of its work inviting participation from provinces, dioceses, congregations, and individuals who are engaged in such theological work, and inviting theological reflection from throughout the Anglican Communion; and be it further

*Resolved*, That bishops, particularly those in dioceses within civil jurisdictions where same-gender 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 this Convention honor the theological diversity of this Church in regard to matters of human sexuality; and be it further

*Resolved*, That the members of this Church be encouraged to engage in this effort.

## **Sources for above referenced legislation:**

Legislation pages of the 76<sup>th</sup> (2009) General Convention  
[http://gc2009.org/ViewLegislation/view\\_Legislation.aspx](http://gc2009.org/ViewLegislation/view_Legislation.aspx)

Digital Archives of the Episcopal Church  
<http://www.episcopalarchives.org/e-archives/acts/>

## **Recommended for further reading:**

*To Set Our Hope on Christ*  
<http://www.episcopalchurch.org/documents/ToSetOurHopeOnChrist.pdf>



TEC Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music  
Addressing General Convention Resolution C056, *Liturgies for Blessing*

Outline of Theological Principles  
December 31, 2010

## I. Baptismal Grounding

The Christian life is rooted in the sacrament of baptism, an effective sign of our participation in God's mission in the world and a reminder of our hope for the fulfillment of all things in God-in-Christ. Every covenant and commitment we make as Christians offers an opportunity to live out our baptismal covenant in new ways.

## II. Theological Retrieval

Rooting the blessing of covenantal relationships in baptism suggests a fruitful retrieval of three key touchstones from Christian history concerning the significance of those covenants, including same-gender relationships:

1. The *sacramental* character of covenantal relationships (committed relationships make God's presence and divine grace visible);
2. The *Trinitarian* imprint of covenantal life (the perpetual and mutual self-giving and other-receiving of the Holy Trinity);
3. The *eschatological* vision inspired and evoked by covenantal relationship (the desire that leads us to commit ourselves to another person reflects the human desire and hope for union with God-in-Christ).

## III. Renewing the Church's Theological Reflection

Retrieving the sacramental character, Trinitarian imprint, and eschatological vision in committed relationships can renew the church's theological reflection on covenantal relationships, including same-gender unions, with these five key principles:

- *Vocation*: People are called into long-term committed relationships, as a vocation;
- *Covenant-making*: Loving faithfulness can participate in and reflect God's own covenantal commitment to God's creation;
- *Households*: Covenants create households as "*schools of virtue*" for life-long formation in spiritual discipline nurtured by divine grace;
- *Fruitfulness*: Faithful love in relationship enables the offering of countless gifts to the wider community that would not be possible in the same way apart from that relationship, including: lives of service, compassion, generosity, and hospitality;
- *Mutual Blessing*: The liturgical blessing of a covenantal relationship acknowledges the fruits of the Spirit in that relationship and in turn becomes a blessing to the faith community, strengthening the community for its mission and ministry in the world.

## IV. Summary of Theological Principles

Covenantal relationships are one way for Christians to live out their baptismal calling in the world. As the Church discerns the fruits of the Spirit in faithful commitments – such as households marked by compassion, generosity, and hospitality – these commitments become a blessing to the wider community. Blessing covenantal relationships, including same-gender unions, thus belongs to the mission of the Church in its ongoing witness to the good news of God-in-Christ and the Christian hope of union with God.



**TEC Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music**  
**Addressing General Convention Resolution C056, *Liturgies for Blessing***

**Principles for Evaluating Liturgical Materials**  
**December 31, 2010**

Materials proposed for blessing same-gender relationships must above all be consistent with the implicit theology and ecclesiology of the 1979 Book of Common Prayer. This would suggest, for example, that they must reflect the Prayer Book's underlying assumption that the entire life of the Church finds its origin in the baptismal font.

Nearly as important is that the proposed liturgical materials embody a classically Anglican liturgical ethos and style. Recognizing the varying notions of what makes public prayer recognizably Anglican, the task group identified these qualities:

- It resonates with Scripture.
- It has high literary value; is it beautiful according to accepted and respected standards.
- It uses the recurring structures, linguistic patterns, and metaphors of the 1979 BCP.
- It is formal, not casual, conversational, or colloquial.
- It has a ritual or sacral register.
- It is dense enough to “carry the freight” of the sacred purpose for which it is intended.
- It is metaphoric without being obtuse.
- It is performative.

At the same time, these rites must resonate as natural speech in contemporary ears. A sacral register must be achieved without the use of arcane or antiquated words or patterns of speech.

The rites should provide explanatory notes and rubrics. The material must be considered as the script for an event, not a mere collection of texts.

The proposed rites must be an expression primarily of the entire Church, not the couple seeking a blessing. These rites must allow for robust communal participation, reflecting the Baptismal ecclesiology of the Prayer Book. Related to this, since the Eucharist is the symbol of the unity of the Church though unity with Christ, these services of blessing should normatively be celebrated within the Eucharist.

These rites must enact the notion of sacramental reciprocity put forth by the C056 Theological Resources Task Group, suggesting that, even as the Church blesses the relationship of the couple, the relationship of the couple is a blessing to the Church.

Options must be provided so that this action of the entire Church—this common prayer—does not degenerate into a generic rite. The Prayers of the People will be important in this regard, as will other texts. There must be a provision of numerous options.

The rites must hold up the two people making the covenant as the primary ministers within this action of God and of the entire Church. The rites should give expression to the Church's understanding that the couple is freely assuming a vocation, which can be expected to yield the fruits of mutual fidelity for the couple, itself, for the Church, and for the entire world, pointing ultimately toward the fulfillment of all human relationships and unity in the eschatological Reign of God, when God will be all-in-all.

They must be what they purport to be—liturgical prayer—not didactic or polemical statements in the guise of liturgy.



TEC Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music  
Addressing General Convention Resolution C056, *Liturgies for Blessing*

## Christian Life and Covenants

### Theological Reflection on the Blessing of Same-Gender Unions

#### Introduction

General Convention Resolution C056 called for, in part, the collection and development of theological resources for the blessing of same-gender unions. The Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music created a Theological Resources Task Group (TRTG) to address that aspect of the resolution. The TRTG then drafted the following theological reflection. While the following is meant to guide the Commission in its work concerning same-gender unions in particular, the TRTG believes that this kind of theological reflection would apply much more broadly to a variety of covenantal relationships. The TRTG hopes this work will thus further renew the Church's theological reflection on all forms of committed, covenantal relationships, including marriage.

#### I. Baptismal Grounding

The Christian life is rooted in the sacrament of baptism, an effective sign of our participation in God's mission in the world and a reminder of our hope for the fulfillment of all things in God. Every covenant and commitment we make as Christians offers an opportunity to live out the affirmations and promises of baptism. Reflecting on same-gender unions as covenants, and thus evoking the Baptismal Covenant, suggests three key theological touchstones in Christian traditions regarding the significance of covenants more generally:

1. Covenantal relationships exhibit a sacramental character, which makes God's presence and divine grace visible;
2. Covenantal relationships participate in the Trinitarian life of God as persons in covenant with each other reflect (though certainly in finite, imperfect ways) the dynamic mutuality and self-giving of the Holy Trinity;
3. Covenantal relationships renew an eschatological vision in Christian life as the desire that leads us to commit ourselves to another person reflects the hope for union with God.

Taken together, these three baptismal touchstones can recall the overarching Biblical narrative traced from creation and fall through covenant, redemption, and fulfillment. The covenants we make, in other words, carry the potential to reflect God's own covenantal relationship with God's creation, which is particularly manifested in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

#### II. Theological Reflection on Covenant-Making

An important way of living out the baptismal covenant is through the making of "households," which can of course include a wide range of relationships (couples, friends, extended families, religious communities, and so on). God calls people into this kind of covenantal life a divine vocation. Like any other vocation, covenantal relationship requires intentional commitment to spiritual discipline. Moreover, households can become an important location for training ourselves in the love of neighbor, receiving divine grace, and practicing reconciliation and forgiveness.



A particularly fruitful avenue for theological reflection would invite explicit links between the household called “Church” and the more particular households created through our covenant-making with others. Those links can be made in at least two important ways.

First, the Eucharistic table around which the baptized gather becomes a location for recalling all the other tables around which we gather in our various households. The four-fold movement of the Eucharist (take, bless, break, give) suggests a way to reflect on how we offer our covenantal relationships to God, who then takes our offering, blesses it, breaks us open, and gives us to the world for ministry and service.

Second, the Paschal Mystery of Christ’s death and resurrection offers a model for our household relationships of dying to sin and being reborn to new life. The giving of ourselves to covenantal relationship belongs to the lifelong process of conversion, of taking on the “mind of Christ” (Phil. 2:1-5), as we live no longer for ourselves alone but for the sake of the Gospel (Mark 8:35). The Paschal Mystery thus reminds us that covenantal relationships are not an end in themselves. Instead, and just like the Baptismal Covenant, our relationships can offer a glimpse and a foretaste of union with God at the heavenly banquet.

These rich theological themes, rooted in Baptism, Eucharist, and the Paschal Mystery, offer ways for the Church to reflect on how committed relationships become a blessing for the wider faith community. Covenantal relationships bear witness to the good news of the Gospel, not least by enabling those engaged in such relationships to manifest the fruits of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23) in ways that they might not otherwise have done apart from the relationship. Discerning the gifts of the Spirit in a relationship is one reason why a faith community offers a blessing for that relationship; it is also why the relationship in turn becomes a blessing to the community.

These then, in brief, are the key theological principles informing the work of the task groups in relation to General Convention resolution C056:

- *Vocation*: God calls people into long-term committed relationships as a vocation;
- *Covenant-making*: Loving faithfulness can participate in and reflect God’s own covenantal commitment to God’s creation;
- *Households*: Covenants create households as “schools of virtue” for life-long formation in spiritual discipline nurtured by divine grace;
- *Fruitfulness*: Faithful love in relationship enables the offering of countless gifts to the wider community that would not be possible in the same way apart from that relationship, including: lives of service, compassion, generosity, and hospitality;
- *Mutual Blessing*: The liturgical blessing of a covenantal relationship acknowledges the fruits of the Spirit in that relationship and in turn becomes a blessing to the faith community, strengthening the community for its mission and ministry in the world.

In sum, covenantal relationships are one way for Christians to live out their baptismal calling in the world. As the Church discerns the fruits of the Spirit in faithful commitments – such as households marked by compassion, generosity, and hospitality – these commitments become a blessing to the wider community. Blessing covenantal relationships, including same-gender unions, thus belongs to the mission of the Church in its ongoing witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the Christian hope of union with God.

### III. Draft Outline of Theological Resources

Based on the theological principles drafted thus far, the TRTG is proposing to craft several essays in response to the resolution’s call for theological resources. The following is an outline of those resources, which the TRTG hopes will prove useful not only for the blessing of same-gender relationships but also for deeper theological reflection on all forms of covenantal relationship throughout the Church.

## Faith, Hope, and Love: Theological Resources for the Blessing of Same-Gender Unions

### Introduction and Executive Summary

The introduction will articulate the method for theological reflection employed by the task group in assembling these resources, including: how to read and interpret Scripture; how the Church discerns the presence of God today and in conversation with historical traditions; how Christian communities remain in communion with each other even when we find ourselves disagreeing on some matters. The executive summary will offer an overview of the theological reflection informing this work: it is *faithful* to the Gospel as this is expressed in baptism; it manifests the Christian *hope* for union with God; and it is rooted most of all in *love* – the love expressed in human covenants as this reflects the love of God for the world, which the Church is called to serve.

### A. Christian Life and Covenants

This essay will expand on the outline and narrative treatment of the theological principles in the first two sections of this present document noted above.

### B. The Church's Work: A Theology of Blessing

The Church's work of prayer and worship includes various forms of blessing. This essay will articulate a theological approach to liturgical blessing by considering what a blessing actually is and what it "does," as well as how the Church discerns when a blessing is appropriate. The meaning of a blessing is at least two-fold: 1) it gives voice to where God's people have already discerned God's active presence; and 2) it acknowledges the ongoing need for divine grace.

### C. The Church's Calling: A Focus on Mission

The Church's liturgical life of common prayer and worship is not for the Church alone but for the world, which God has called the Church to serve. This essay will place Resolution C056 within that wider context of the Church's mission and ministry, not only for same-gender couples and their families, but also for the wider society. All covenantal relationships, rooted in the Baptismal Covenant, play a role in proclaiming Christian hope and the good news of the Gospel.

### Appendix A: Biblical Quandaries and Christian Unity

Resolution C056 acknowledges the differences of opinion within the Episcopal Church concerning the interpretation of Scripture and same-gender relationships. This appendix will provide an overview of the biblical scholarship on that topic that has stretched over many decades. It will also outline the variety of approaches to biblical interpretation, proposing ways for the Church to move forward together without necessarily agreeing on just one such approach.

### Appendix B: For Further Reading and Study

A great deal of material has already been written on the theology, ethics, and spirituality of same-gender relationships. This appendix will provide an annotated list of just some of those resources that the TRTG believes would be most helpful for those who wish to do further reading and study on these topics.



TEC Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music  
Addressing General Convention Resolution C056, *Liturgies for Blessing*

## **An Outline of a Rite for Witnessing and Blessing a Lifelong Covenant**

### **The Word of God**

- Proper Opening Acclamation / Dialogue
- (Optional introductory comments by celebrant, explaining the purpose of the gathering and bidding prayer for the couple)
- Proper Collect
- Proper Readings
- Sermon

### **The Blessing**

- Declaration by the couple of their desire for the blessing of God and the Church
- Presentation of the couple by friends / family / representatives of the congregation
- Affirmation by the congregation; pledge of support
- Prayers of the People (for the Church and world, with special prayers for the couple)
- Vows
- Blessing and exchanging of rings
- Blessing of the couple
- The Peace
- (Blessing of the congregation and dismissal if Holy Communion is not to follow)

### **The Holy Communion**

*The Liturgy of the Eucharist is celebrated as usual except:*

- Proper Preface



TEC Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music  
Addressing General Convention Resolution C056, *Liturgies for Blessing*

**Task Group on Pastoral and Teaching Resources**  
**Executive Summary**

*The Task Group on Pastoral Counseling and Teaching Materials* is charged with addressing the needs of the church in providing:

- teaching materials and resources to help congregations in a discernment process regarding the blessing of same-gender relationships, and
- excellent pastoral counseling resources for same-gender couples who come to the church for a blessing;

We framed our work in response to the charge in Resolution C056 to “devise an open process ... inviting participation from provinces, dioceses, congregations, and individuals.” In October 2010 we created a SurveyMonkey instrument and invited the church to help us with these tasks. Between then and January 6, 2011 we received 1131 responses from 111 dioceses and all 9 Provinces. The Task Group was split into two sub-groups to study the data, summarize it and make preliminary recommendations about “next steps.”

**Teaching Materials:** Approximately 23% of the respondents stated that the blessing of same-gender relationships already occur in their congregations. Among those responders who said that their congregations bless same-gender couples, 55% confirmed that their congregations engaged in an educational and/or discernment process before the blessing of same-gender relationships began. Our report notes the kinds of material many congregations have used and a significant list of desired resources.

Recognizing the broad diversity of experience and perspective on the blessing of same-gender relationships within the Episcopal Church we suggest a variety of resources—including tools for dioceses and congregations to explore why the church would bless same-gender relationships as well as a road-map for discernment for those exploring how to provide blessings for the same-gender couples in their congregations. In addition, we plan to provide resources that will support the work of the Theological and Liturgical Task Groups.

**Pastoral Counseling:** 32% of respondents said that their preparation of same gender couples was different than opposite gender couples, and 43% of those responding stated the need for additional resources. Our report notes the need for specific materials, the differences in preparing same-gender couples than opposite-gender couples and some recommended resources.

We plan to further review these resources and adapt the best resources for the Episcopal Church. We also believe that our work will help strengthen preparation for all couples.

Finally, our report includes an outline for the final Blue Book Report. We anticipate having a number of addendums that will not be part of the formal report, but will be samples of resources for pastoral counseling and congregational discernment and learning.



**TEC Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music**  
**Addressing General Convention Resolution C056, *Liturgies for Blessing***

**Task Group on Pastoral and Teaching Resources**  
**Discussion Questions for Participants**

These discussion questions are intended for use with the flyer “The Episcopal Church Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music Responds to 2009 General Convention Resolution C056: Liturgies for Blessings (of Same-Gender Relationships)” (September 2010).

**GC Resolution C056 (Groups 1, 8, and 15)**

- How does our relationship with the governance of the church intersect with our daily faith lives, and our identity as Christian/Episcopalians?
- Why is it important to go through the General Convention when blessings are already taking place around the Communion?

**Theology (Groups 2 and 9)**

- How do our inherited texts, and the exposition thereof, form and inform our knowledge of God, and our individual and corporate life together?
- Why is it important to consider the theological implications of celebration, blessing, and the consideration of blessing same-gender relationships before any move forward?

**Liturgies (Groups 3 and 10)**

- As people who pray what we believe, how does establishing an approved rite of blessing for same gender couples distinguish that act from other prayers and blessings (e.g. House Blessings, Blessing of a Civil Marriage) available for persons in the church?
- Why would a liturgy crafted just for this purpose be experienced as "separate but equal" to same-gendered couples?

**Pastoral Response (Groups 4 and 11)**

- How have you experienced the institution of marriage in your life, in your family, and in your community?
- Why might individuals, couples, and parishes need additional pastoral attention and resources for the consideration of rites of same-gender blessing?

**Teaching Response (Groups 5 and 12)**

- How do we learn, over our lifetimes, about what it means to be the people of God?
- Why is there a desire for consensus on this particular issue - especially around terms like marriage, blessing, and covenant?

**Canonical Questions (Groups 6 and 13)**

- How can the church be faithful, and Give God thanks for the blessing of couples in our churches who have already been provided a legal means of marriage, civil union, domestic partnership, or other legal status - when there remain regions where those are not available?
- Why would it matter if the church decided against providing such approved rites of blessing?

**Process (Groups 7 and 14)**

- The brochure outlines the hearings, gatherings, consultations, surveys, and other means through which church members could/can participate in this process of securing these rites of blessing. What is your experience of the background of this particular resolution, starting back in 1976 when LGBT persons of faith were claimed as full members of the body of Christ?
- How can we make this process even more open, and available, and most especially, how can we continue to come joyfully to the table in spite of our differences?



TEC Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music  
Addressing General Convention Resolution C056, *Liturgies for Blessing*

**Task Group on Pastoral and Teaching Resources**  
**Interim Report for the SCLM Meeting in March 2011**

**OVERVIEW**

*The Task Group on Pastoral Counseling and Teaching Materials* is charged with addressing the needs of the church in providing:

- teaching materials and resources to help congregations in a discernment process regarding the blessing of same-gender relationships, and
- excellent pastoral counseling resources for same-gender couples who come to the church for a blessing;

We framed our work in response to the charge in Resolution C056 to “devise an open process ... inviting participation from provinces, dioceses, congregations, and individuals.” Part of that open process was a survey the Episcopal Church to find out what resources are or have already been used in a congregational discernment process to welcome same-gender blessings and to prepare couples for a Christian life together and for a blessing ceremony.

Additionally, we wanted to know what materials and other resources might be helpful to congregations and clergy who might start a discernment process about whether to bless same-gender relationships as a part of their life as a Christian community. In October 2010 we created a SurveyMonkey instrument and invited the church to help us with these tasks. Between then and January 6, 2011 we received 1131 responses from 111 dioceses and all 9 Provinces (Note: an additional 3 responders were unidentified and 5 were from outside ECUSA). The Task Group was split into two sub-groups to study the data, summarize it and make preliminary recommendations about “next steps.” This is their report.

(NOTE: *The outline for our final report is Appendix D. This Task Group was blessed with earlier work done by the Province of New England/ Province One and published in October 2008. That report provided us with an outline for how to move forward.*)

**Report from the Sub-Group on PASTORAL CARE**

**1. Overview**

More and more dioceses in The Episcopal Church operate in states or countries that offer some kind of legal connection or protections for same gender couples. As a result, needs for pastoral responses and resources have increased dramatically. Many clergy and lay leaders involved in preparation for same gender blessings are “making do.” The need for new, commonly held resources is clear. Pastoral support for these couples is an act of love, reconciliation, empowerment and healing.

We are confident that most clergy and lay leaders who currently offer pre-marriage counseling are more than capable of working with same gender couples. Clergy skills do transfer! The majority of issues are more similar than different. However, it is necessary and helpful to understand the differences. This report addresses what we learned from the House of Bishops, what we learned from survey data received in the fall of 2010 from clergy and laity from all parts of The Episcopal Church, highlights some things that are different in working with these couples, and makes suggestions for resources to use in counseling same gender couples.

In the *House of Bishops Fall 2010 Consultation on C056 Table Conversations*, some themes emerged that were directly related to Pastoral Care. In these conversations there were multiple mentions of the need for good pastoral and counseling resources as well as for materials for parish education on issues related to blessing of same gender relationships. The resources that were most used and felt to be most useful are outlined below in section three. These themes were reflected in the results of the SurveyMonkey circulated to all dioceses and provinces of The Episcopal Church in the fall of 2010. Results from this survey follow.

## 2. Congregations that have done same gender blessings

### a. Blessing preparation materials and resources - What we learned:

32% of respondents said that their preparation of same gender couples was different than opposite gender couples, and 43% of those responding stated the need for additional resources.

We were impressed by clergy statements proclaiming that the relationships of same gender couples offer a sacramental witness to the Church and the world, and further that these relationships bring a gift of grace to the church, and to opposite gender couples, by modeling role equality. We were moved when we read the following: *Lack of recognition creates a sense of positive/joyful surprise when a couple receives from the church and community what straight couples take for granted, e.g., recognition of their engagement and their visibility as a couple.* This request from a clergy person helped us remember why this work is essential: *[I hope for] an explanation that everything we love and believe about Christian marriage REMAINS TRUE, whether the partners are a man and a woman, two women, or two men."*

### b. The top six pre-blessing preparation and counseling desires for same gender couples requested by respondents to the survey clustered in these categories. The need for:

- 22% information on issues specific to same gender couples & materials that offer guidance on differences for couples and clergy
- 15% definite counseling materials
- 11% authorized rites (e.g., for trial use with permission of ecclesiastical authority)
- 8% more information about legal aspects
- 4% adaptation of *Prepare/Enrich* materials
- 4% materials that offer personal stories from couples

### c. The six categories that respondents felt markedly differentiated pre-blessing preparation for same gender couples from opposite gender couples were:

- 31% Cultural issues, tensions of family and social dynamics



- 12% Many blessings are of long-term relationships and may also involve the needs of older couples
- 9% Difference in lack of available blessing preparation resources
- 6% Family of origin supports; children and adoption issues
- 6% Real and perceived discrimination in dioceses where marriage or civil union is not a right or where diocese does not allow blessings
- 6% Coming out process a factor in relationship – may be different for each individual

### 3. Recommended Resources / Assessment Instruments for Premarital Counseling

Based upon our study of the data this is our preliminary list of resources which could help the church with preparing same-gender couples for a blessing ceremony.

- a. ***Prepare/Enrich* (Life Innovations, Inc.)** <https://www.prepare-enrich.com>
  - *By far, most favorably rated among SCLM Survey respondents*
  - *Positives:* newly revised customized version easily used with same-gender couples; elicits couples' and individuals' goals; includes children; comprehensive and realistic; includes personality assessment
  - *Negatives:* standardized for heterosexual couples only; training workshop required
- b. ***Premarriage Awareness Inventory* (Logos Productions)** <http://www3.logosproductions.com>
  - *Preferred by those not trained in Prepare/Enrich*
  - *Positives:* three customized formats that include those living together or previously married; thorough personality assessment; covers major areas such as faith, finances, family of origin, children, power issues, life goals
  - *Negatives:* standardized for heterosexual couples only
- c. ***All Whom God has Joined: resources for clergy and same-gender loving couples* (Leanne McCall Tigert and Maren C. Tirabassi; Pilgrim Press, c2010)**
  - *Forward by the Rt. Rev. Gene Robinson*
  - *Positives:* New collection of pastoral care tools, insights and liturgical resources on same-gender ceremonies for clergy and couples
  - *Negatives:* Source too new to be widely used and reviewed; pastoral work not sole focus
- d. ***The Marriage Journey: preparation and provisions for life together* (Linda Grenz and Delbert Glover; Church Publishing, c2003)**
  - *Recommended by counselors finding online inventories impersonal*
  - *Positives:* Discussion questions helpful, yet not overly directive; includes couples living together and those with children; clear, direct language; ideal for those turned off by "scored" tests or technologically challenged
  - *Negatives:* no personality assessment included



- e. **Four session preparation format outlined in *Province I Pastoral Resources Report* (Includes Wallace-Locke Marital Adjustment Test (MAT))**

<http://stjohnscarlisle.org/safe/SAFe info to read II 3-8-10.pdf>

- Pastoral Resources for Province One Episcopal Clergy Ministering to Same-Gender Couples, 2008, pgs 11-16

- f. **Pre-blessing counseling framework adapted by a member of our sub-committee from *Province I Pastoral Resources Report guidelines* (see Appendix C)**

**4. Remarks and Recommendations:**

Many clergy view same gender couples as needing additional supports and desire additional materials. Those that do not wish additional resources have been able to adapt existing materials for use with these couples, supporting the contention of our sub-committee that similarities are greater than differences and that pastoral and counseling skills do translate.

Clearly lay leaders and clergy involved in blessing preparation will benefit from materials and resources specific to these couples as well as from increased awareness of the challenges and difficulties unique to same gender couples. In addition, some parish clergy and lay leaders have a wealth of experience in educating and preparing congregations for same gender blessings, however many others desire materials created specifically for this need.

We are confident that the added awareness, skill and intentionality that rise from these resources and materials will benefit not only pre-marriage and blessing preparation for same gender couples but also preparation for all couples. Improved preparation for all covenanted relationships and the support provided to these relationships by parishes will help keep them strong and enduring. The result will be a strengthening of the fabric of our Episcopal faith community.

As we look forward our sub-group will be working to:

- a) Create or adapt preparation and pre-blessing counseling materials that are specific to same gender couples
- b) Provide preparation and pre-blessing counseling materials that use gender-neutral language for use with both same gender and opposite gender couples
- c) Create a template for pre-blessing preparation (see Appendix C)

## **Report from the Sub-Group on TEACHING MATERIALS**

Our sub-group reflected upon the SurveyMonkey data, the 362 notes from the House of Bishops table conversations and the insights of our own members regarding educational models for congregations. We found that most of the information from all these sources mirrored one another.

Approximately 23% of the over 1,000 Episcopalians who responded to the survey stated that the blessing of same-gender relationships already occur in their congregations. Among those responders who said that their congregations bless same-gender couples, 55% confirmed that their congregations engaged in an educational and/or discernment process before the blessing of same-gender relationships began.

Responders reported a wide diversity of discernment experiences. This included:

- Sermons, Vestry Study, Congregation Forums for discussion
  - Facilitated by guest speakers from dioceses who have experience
  - Ranging from multi-week series to multi-year process (some as early as 1981)
- Education/discussion was a draw for new members; for others it brought about deep seated division

Discussion and dialogue were mentioned often as the most important aspect of what parishes were already doing and what they felt was essential to do moving forward. In most of the reported examples, parish clergy and lay leaders led a discernment process that involved theological study, conversations with their bishop and congregational engagement through forums and meetings. Survey comments indicate that vestry approval is an important part of the discernment process for congregations that bless same-gender couples.

We asked responders to tell us what types of educational materials would be helpful for a congregation that wanted to engage in a discernment process prior to beginning the blessing of same-gender relationships. Responders expressed a strong desire for thoughtful and accessible teaching resources from The Episcopal Church. Responders suggested that the distribution of model or sample blessing liturgies would be the most helpful resource that could be provided. There were also calls for theological and biblical teaching resources that would be useful to clergy and lay leaders who could lead classes and forums to explain how the blessing of same-gender couples is consistent with the theological and biblical teachings of The Episcopal Church.

Responders also want to know more about the history and tradition of marriage in the Church and an explanation of the distinctions between traditional marriage and the blessing of same-gender couples. Many responders also asked for tools to explain to congregations how The Episcopal Church has come, over the past several decades, to discern that blessing same-gender couples is a good and rightful thing to do.

Based on survey responses and the experiences of task group members, we recommend that congregations that do not currently experience the blessing of same-gender couples undertake an educational and/or discernment process involving parish clergy, lay leaders and members of congregations as they prepare to use the liturgical resources provided by the liturgical task group.

### **Our Plan in Response to the Data**

Recognizing the broad diversity of experience and perspective on the blessing of same-gender relationships within the Episcopal Church we suggest a variety of resources -- including tools for dioceses and congregations to explore why the church would bless same-gender relationships as well as a road-map for discernment for those exploring how to provide blessings for the same-gender couples in their congregations. (see attached list – Appendix A)

We want to follow an initial image that was shared at our first meeting: It is like Parent Magazine: some people just want the title and short paragraph about an issue; others want to read a full article and others want lots of resources for further study. Our approach will be to suggest time-lines, Vestry and parish education, how to hold communities with divergent opinions together, and helpful information about the civil and ecclesial legalities that vary from diocese-to-diocese.

Additionally, we plan to provide educational material for congregations to be able to study the SCLM's Theological and Liturgical Principles and other materials that come from those Task Groups.

### **Summary of the Data**

About a fourth of the respondents have had same-gender blessings in their parishes, and over half of those did discernment in their parishes, seeming always to include the vestry, prior to the service.

While almost evenly divided (55 % no, 45% yes) folks wanting resources for use in their parish seemed quite eager for help.

From the 316 Comments replying to the Question: "What would you need for educational materials – What do you think would be helpful?" This is how their requests broke down:

Number of Respondents:	Request:
70	Samples of the liturgies suggested
52	Theological teaching resources
[48	Give us any and everything; we really need help]
43	Biblical teaching resources
32	Definitions/Distinctions teaching about marriage vs. blessing
30	Information on the history and tradition of marriage in the church
24	Specific Teaching on why this matters – Why the church is doing this
16	Materials that will help congregations accept LGBT persons
13	Anecdotal experience of LGBT persons in church & with blessings
13	Equal room for those for whom this is problematic, gentle conflict, honoring everyone, education and blessings are not <u>required</u> .
12	Pastoral resources for couples
11	Information about the current stats of LGBT's in society, civil rights, canon law
11	Where the church stands now/how we got to current canons of marriage and inclusion/history of GC resolutions
10	Resources for teaching children and youth
9	A way to affirm LGBT persons and couples
8	Exercises that reflect the potential joy, God's love for all, a renewed spiritual presence for couples and the parish.
3	How this work is connected to our baptismal covenant
2	Information about being gay and sexual identity
1	The nature of Anglicanism/Hooker
1	Teaching about extra-marital sex
1	Teach about what would happen if we decide NOT to do this

## Appendix A

### List of Potential Teaching Materials and Resources

A variety of resources have already been used by congregations considering the possibility of blessing same-gender relationships. These resources range from informal conversation to multi-session programming, engaging the leadership of the congregation, all the way down to the youngest members of the community. Following are suggestions of existing resources for use in congregations and suggestions for resources that could be created

#### 1. For Congregational Leadership and Adults

Adults will most likely engage this issue through (intentional) informal conversation, presentations followed by discussion questions, lecture/media series, rector's forums, a sermon series, or by appointment with their clergy. There are several dioceses which have appointed a task force to do this work with intention and to share it with the diocese, as well as advocacy organizations that have collected materials and created discussion series' for use by small groups, or congregations. Some examples are given below.

Discussion on this issue typically begins with questions regarding scripture, followed by tradition and how that will change (Liturgy), theology and finally "should we be doing this/will we be doing this?"

Report of the Task Force on Holiness in Relationships and the Blessing of Same-Sex Unions  
Holiness In Relationships Task Force Study developed by a task force of the same name in the Diocese of San Diego, 2009

[http://www.edsd.org/HolinessinRel\\_MMtmp579835e5/HolinessinRelationshipsReportJune2009.pdf](http://www.edsd.org/HolinessinRel_MMtmp579835e5/HolinessinRelationshipsReportJune2009.pdf)

"Good News: A Congregational Resource for Reconciliation." Published by Episcopal Divinity School, 2004 <http://www.edecr.org/sitefiles/file/otherdocs/CongregSupt-GoodNews-Jun2004.pdf>

"Writings on Marriage" an ebook created by the Diocese of North Carolina, 2010  
[http://www.lulu.com/product/file-download/writings-on-marriage/6172916?productTrackingContext=search\\_results/search\\_shelf/center/2](http://www.lulu.com/product/file-download/writings-on-marriage/6172916?productTrackingContext=search_results/search_shelf/center/2)

"To Set Our Hope On Christ" a response to the Windsor Report,  
<http://www.episcopalchurch.org/documents/ToSetOurHopeOnChrist.pdf>

"Claiming the Blessing" Informational resource  
[http://www.claimingtheblessing.org/files/pdf/CTBTheology\\_Final\\_.pdf](http://www.claimingtheblessing.org/files/pdf/CTBTheology_Final_.pdf)

**All Love Is of God** is a six-session opportunity for dialogue about the issue of human sexuality in general and homosexuality in particular. Contact The Oasis Newark for copies:<http://theoasis.dioceseofnewark.org/index.htm>

**Claiming the Promise** is a seven-session ecumenical Bible study series that looks at the traditional biblical references which have been troublesome for Christians to defend against homophobia. This and many other resources are available from the **Reconciling Ministries Network**, found at <http://www.rmnetwork.org/learn-more/resources/study-guides-and-worship-resources/> or by calling (773) 736-5526.

## 2. For Youth:

Engaging youth in conversation and reflection regarding same-gender blessings requires a safe space for youth to be themselves in order to be fully present to the conversation. Community building, use of multiple learning styles and an investment of trust and honesty are important to this community within the Church. Lesson plans that discuss gender roles, relationship building, pop culture and tools for conversation and discernment will be most useful.

For many young people the awareness of and even presence of open LGBT community members is common. As a faith community our work with young people will be about dismantling myths, asking questions of equality and justice, and honoring and valuing the differences found within creation.

Journey to Adulthood is a program that many Episcopal Churches are familiar with. Within the context of the program there are some adaptable resources that provide the opportunity for teenagers to have conversation about sexuality, gender and related issues in a safe environment.

Media resource:

Colage: People with Gay and Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Parents, <http://www.colage.org/inmyshoes/> Short documentaries created by youth with LGBTQ parents

**For the Bible Tells Me So** - The moving stories of five very different families, and the choices they made about their LGBT family members. Video and discussion guides available from your diocesan resource centers, and/or at [www.forthetellmeso.org](http://www.forthetellmeso.org).

**How Can I Be Sure God Loves Me Too?** - Wonderful talk given by the Rev. Mel White, exploring the possibility that God creates us all in God's image, and loves us wholly. Free download available at [www.soulforce.org](http://www.soulforce.org).

**Voices of Witness** and **Voices of Witness Africa** - Many survey respondents were interested in hearing directly from LGBT persons in the church. What has their experience been? Why are they choosing to be married? Meet individuals across the church and learn more about their lives in these two films. Videos and discussion guides at [www.voicesofwitness.org](http://www.voicesofwitness.org).

## 3. For Children

The need to remember that children are a part of the conversation has to do with the fact that children learn about the world first from their families and home lives, and then through their engagement with other families in the world around them. Children learn how their own family is alike or different from others in the early stages of development. Providing tools, such as stories, illustrations and engaging teaching moments at an age appropriate level will help children understand and be a part of recognizing the equality of all families in the eyes of God.

National Association for Education of Young Children suggested books for children that include LGBT families, January 2010

[http://www.naeyc.org/files/yc/file/201001/LesserHandout310\\_2.pdf](http://www.naeyc.org/files/yc/file/201001/LesserHandout310_2.pdf)

Additional book recommendations for children, youth and adults:

<http://saintmarysepiscopal.org.s31203.gridserver.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/08/Recommended-books.pdf>

## Appendix B

### List of resources from the data noted by the Pastoral Care Sub-group:

Education materials used by congregations:

- To Set our Hope on Christ
- Logos Productions materials – adapted for SG couples
- For the Bible Tells me So
- Claiming the Blessing Materials
- Believe Out Loud Curriculum
- Fish Out of Water
- Holiness in Relationships Study (Diocese of San Diego)  
[http://www.edsd.org/HolinessinRel\\_MMtmp579835e5/HolinessinRelationshipsReport\\_June2009.pdf](http://www.edsd.org/HolinessinRel_MMtmp579835e5/HolinessinRelationshipsReport_June2009.pdf)

Additional needs for congregational preparation:

- An environment for welcoming, safe, honest, respectful and confidential discussion
- Study of Marriage and Blessings in the Church. What do they mean?
- Resources that are:
  - Rooted in theology, scripture, history, orthodoxy
  - Respectful to all sides; framed in Baptismal Covenant language
    - Why is the Church doing this? Why are some uncomfortable with it?
    - Why is this blessing important to SG couples?
  - Approachable for Sunday morning Adult Forum format (video, leader guide)
- Resources that include:
  - New ways to talk about relationships
  - Discussion “starters” – talking points (both adult and children)
  - Intergenerational approach, multi-cultural context, and relate to those who struggle with this decision
  - Societal biases; changing views on marriage, divorce.
  - Materials to help overcome attitudes that are hurtful to LGBT people
  - What is a “Christian Household” without devolving into polemics of sexuality
  - List of speakers willing to lead conversation with anxious people/congregations
  - Effect on the Anglican Communion?
  - Training manual for facilitators
  - An historical outline of General Convention actions on this issue
  - Deconstructing Heterosexism – affirmation of the goodness/holiness of SG couples
  - What the congregation might expect of SG couple, esp. if raising children
  - How to convey this is “NOT a second class blessing being offered by the Church.”
  - List of competent LGBT counselors by region
  - A Common Bibliography: spiritual aspects of sexuality

## Appendix C

### **A FRAMEWORK FOR PRE-BLESSING COUNSELING FOR SAME GENDER COUPLES - ADAPTING PROVINCE I GUIDELINES**

*Assumption: Unless other issues arise, the priest is comfortable with doing the marriage or blessing.*

#### **First Session:**

Getting to know one another (as in the Province I guidelines) and addressing the practical issues of the ceremony. These practical issues, if not addressed early on, can intrude on the ability to deal with more intimate relational issues. This session can be held very early on when the date is set. Subsequent sessions should be scheduled nearer the actual date of the ceremony.

#### **Second through Fourth (or more if needed):**

Essentially covering the issues spelled out by the Province I template with the inclusion of a discussion of their families: relationships of their parents, the marriages of their siblings (if there are such), what they would replicate or not in their own relationship, the level of acceptance of their relationship by their families, and other issues from their families of origin. (The assumption here is that certain issues continue generation to generation. Once identified, the individual can choose to continue those practices or deliberately eliminate them.)

Finally remember, one framework does not fit all – either for the couple or the counselor. Some clergy are more at ease with using written tools than others. Also, one can never know what issues will be raised that need special attention. It is very important that the clergy refer the couple to a professional counselor if therapeutic work is indicated. Further, the latter is very important if one or both of the persons has been in multiple relationships.

**Draft Outline of SCLM Report  
Pastoral Care and Teaching Resources**

**I. Overview of Whole Section**

Welcome

What This Is

What This Is Not

A Word About Words... & Law

**II. Pastoral Care**

A. Overview

B. Report on Survey Data

1. What we learned from the respondents' experience
2. What they say they need

C. Analysis of the Data

D. Recommendations and resources needed for moving forward

1. Pastoral Issues Specific to LGBT Persons
2. Materials for Preparing Couples

**III. Teaching**

A. Overview

B. Report on Survey Data

1. What we learned from the respondents' experience
2. What they say they need

C. Analysis of the Data

D. Recommendations and resources needed for moving forward

1. For Congregational Leadership
2. For Adults
3. For Youth
4. For Children

**IV. Addendums**

We will create the actual Resources for the Work – does not need to be done for Blue Book

**Pastoral Care**

Special Considerations

Outline of Sessions

Suggested assessment tools

**Teaching**

Study guides for working with Theological Principles

Study guides for working with Liturgical Principles

Material for Congregations and their Leaders

Material for Adults, Youth, Children and Families





TEC Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music  
Addressing General Convention Resolution C056, *Liturgies for Blessing*

**Task Group on Canonical and Legal Issues**  
**Memorandum**

To: C056 Convocation Attendees  
From: Task Group on Canonical and Legal Issues  
Date: March 3, 2011  
Re: Proposed Liturgical Resources for Same-Gender Blessings and the First Amendment

As we explore formal Church blessings for same gender couples, many may ask whether state laws restricting civil marriage to opposite gender couples present problems or risks for the Church, and for Episcopal clergy performing the blessing ceremonies. The Canonical and Legal Considerations Task Group has studied these issues and this Memorandum provides an overview of our findings. We conclude that the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution forbids a state from enforcing a law prohibiting same gender blessings by an ordained person.

The First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which applies both the federal government and to the States, provides:

“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.”

Some thirty-five states define marriage as between a man and a woman and expressly withhold recognition of a marriage of same gender persons obtained lawfully in another state or country. The Task Group has not completed its review of the marriage laws of all states, but believes that this legal scenario is common among the states that forbid and do not recognize same gender marriages. The statutory or constitutional language used varies, but the intended result is the same. Our research is leading to the conclusion that as long as clergy in these states are *blessing relationships*, rather than purporting to *solemnize civil marriages*, the Task Group anticipates no threat of successful state criminal prosecution or other adverse action against the member of the clergy or his or her church. The blessing of a relationship is an exercise of religious faith, whereas the solemnizing of a marriage is an official act as an agent of the state. The First Amendment will recognize the difference between the two and protect the former.

We note that the Book of Common Prayer, and Canon I.18.1, require Episcopal clergy to conform to the laws of their state governing the creation of a civil marriage, so there are disciplinary consequences for an Episcopal clergy member who performs a civil marriage ceremony and signs a state marriage license for a couple not permitted to marry in that state; there could be civil law consequences as well. The Task Group believes that celebrating a same gender blessing ceremony using a Church trial liturgy, for example, would not be counter to the Canons or the Book of Common Prayer – assuming that the language of the liturgy does not use the marriage terminology

(including “husband and wife”) of the Book of Common Prayer or otherwise. Our conclusion also assumes, again that the member of the clergy is not also attempting to solemnize a marriage contrary to state law. Our conclusion and our assumptions also apply where the blessing ceremony is for a same gender couple who has been married (or joined in civil union) in a state where that is legal.

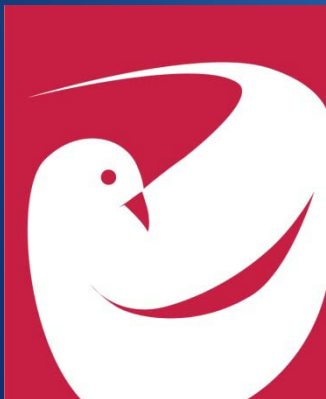
Some state laws not only forbid (or do not recognize) same gender marriage, but also any legal status between same gender couples that approaches or approximates the status of civil marriage (e.g., civil union status). The Task Group concludes that the above analysis and conclusions apply to these laws as well.

We have been developing a working list of related and other issues, questions and areas of research. These include – but will not be limited to, (i) a glossary of commonly used terms and definitions, (ii) issues that may be particular to parts of The Episcopal Church outside the United States and (iii) a survey of Diocesan Canons in this area. We solicit contributions to this working list, so please post to the GCO site your suggestions in this regard.

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The Canonical and Legal Considerations Task Group is comprised of: Thomas Little, Esq., Chair (Chancellor, Vermont, I); Joan Geiszler-Ludlum, Esq., (Chancellor, East Carolina, IV); The Rev. Canon Greg Howe (Custodian of the Book of Common Prayer; Delaware, III); Larry Hitt, Esq., (Chancellor, Colorado, VI); and The Rt. Rev. Stacy Sauls (Lexington, IV).

# Church-Wide Consultation on 2009 General Convention Resolution C056, *Liturgies for Blessings*



## THE BLESSINGS PROJECT

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The Episcopal Church  
Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music



# Gather

The Rev. Dr. Ruth Meyers

Chair, Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music

*Diocese of Chicago*

Hodges-Haynes Professor of Liturgics,  
Church Divinity School of the Pacific



# Gathering Prayer and Song



# Welcome

Dr. Bonnie Anderson

President, House of Deputies

*Diocese of Michigan*



# Ecumenical Guests

Kimberly Bracken Long  
*Presbyterian Church (USA)*

Paul Peucker  
*Northern Province of the  
Moravian Church in America*

Scott Weidler  
*Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*



# Who are we?

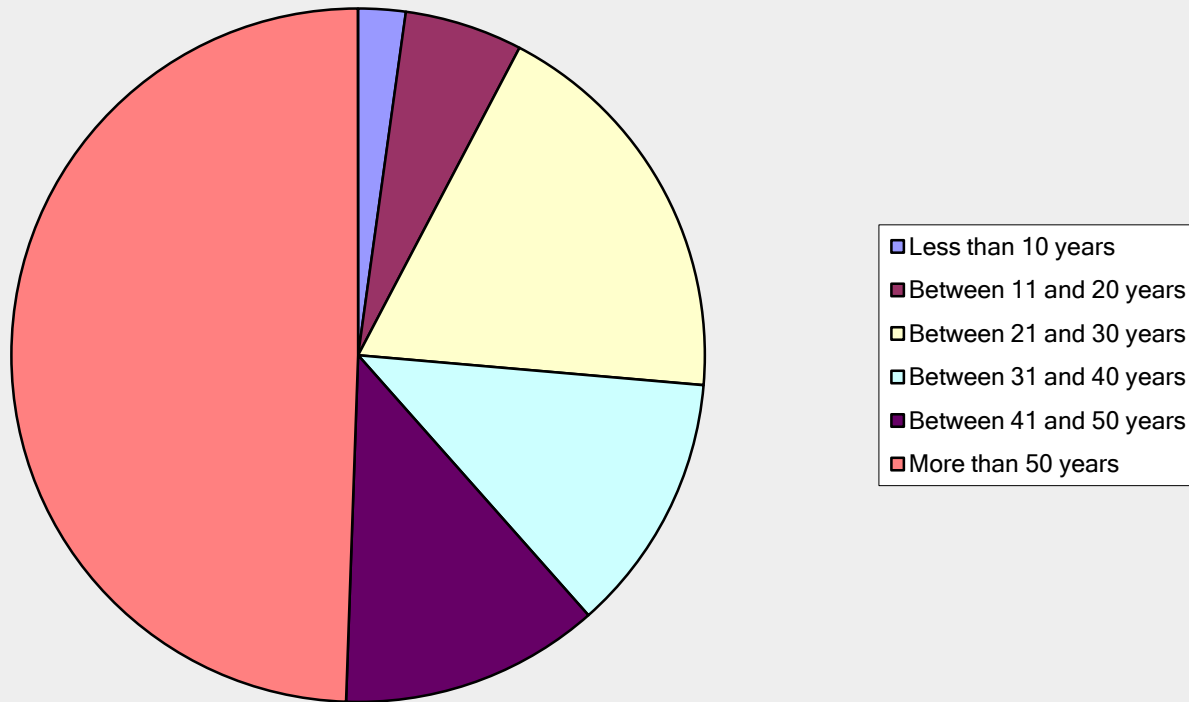
## SurveyMonkey results . . .



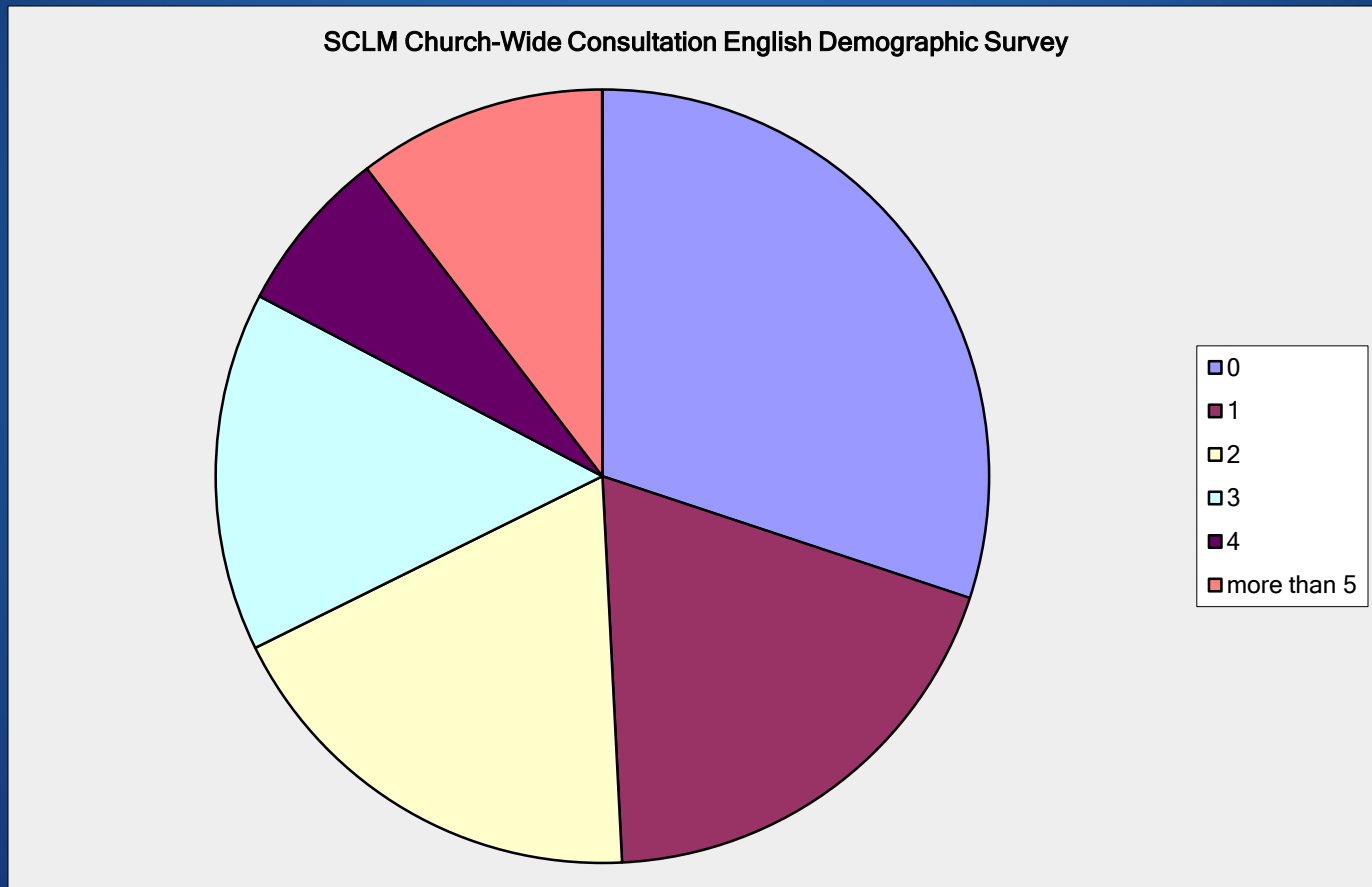


# How long have you been an Episcopalian?

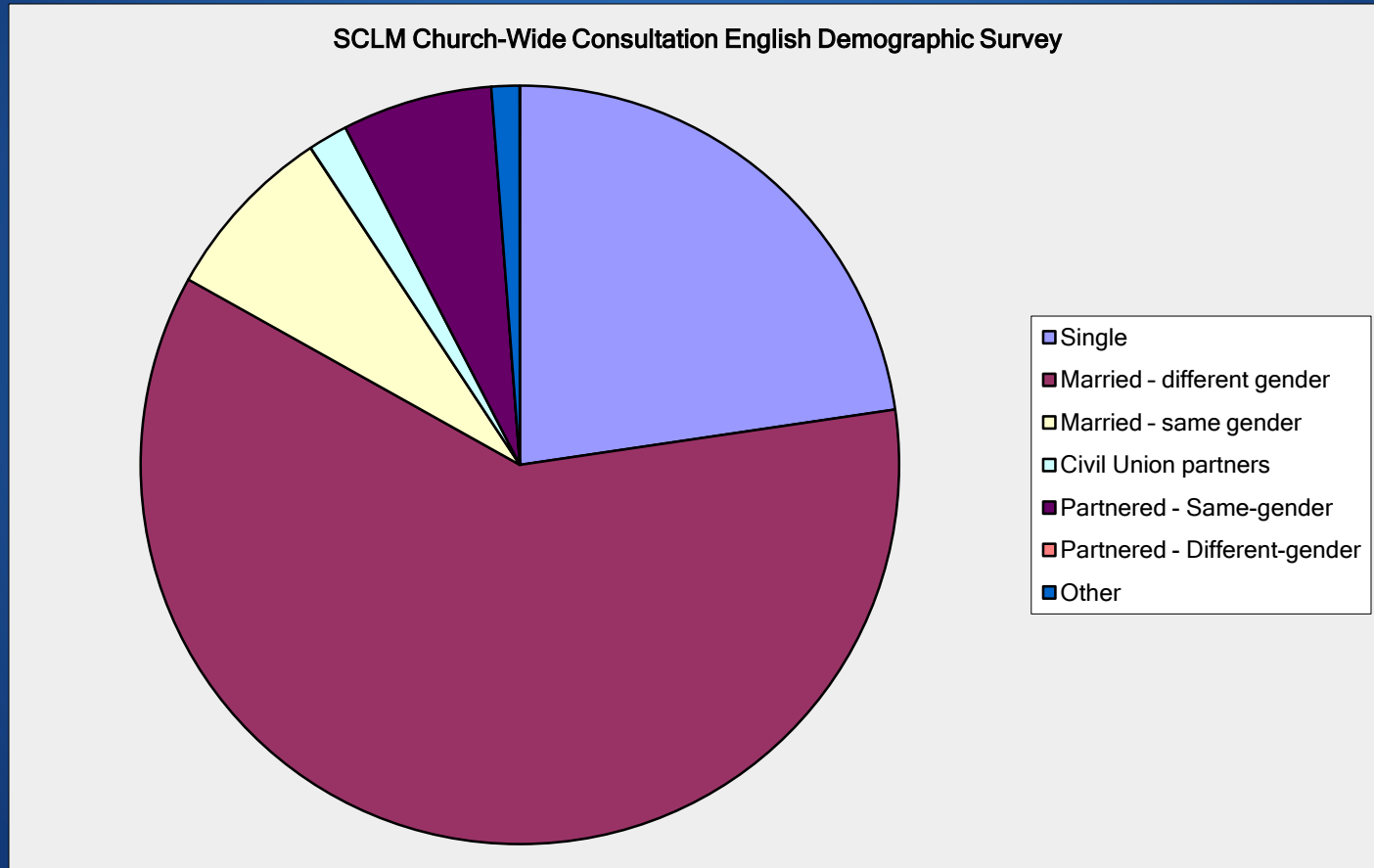
SCLM Church-Wide Consultation English Demographic Survey



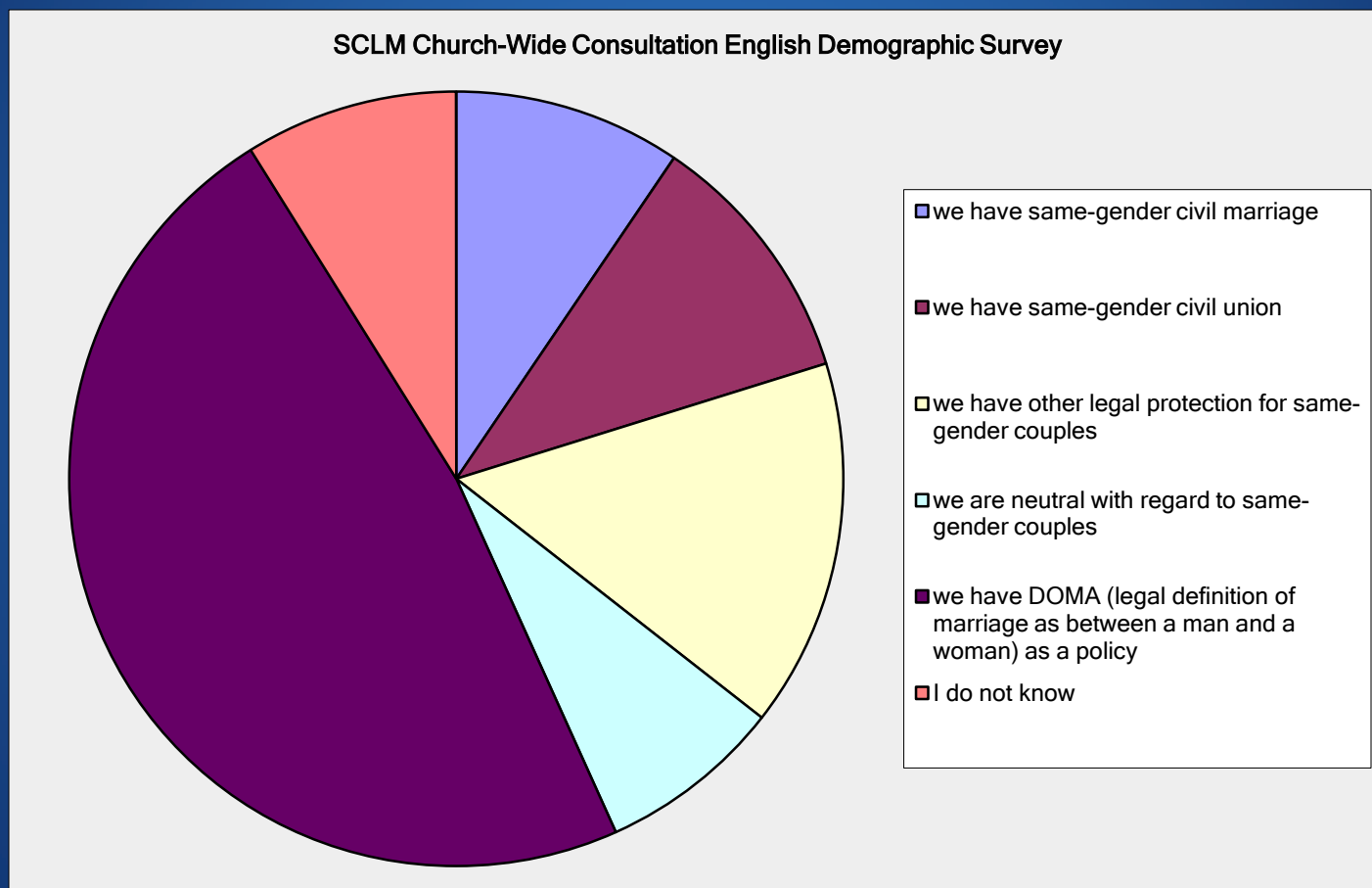
# How many General Conventions have you attended as a deputy?



# My relational/marital status is:

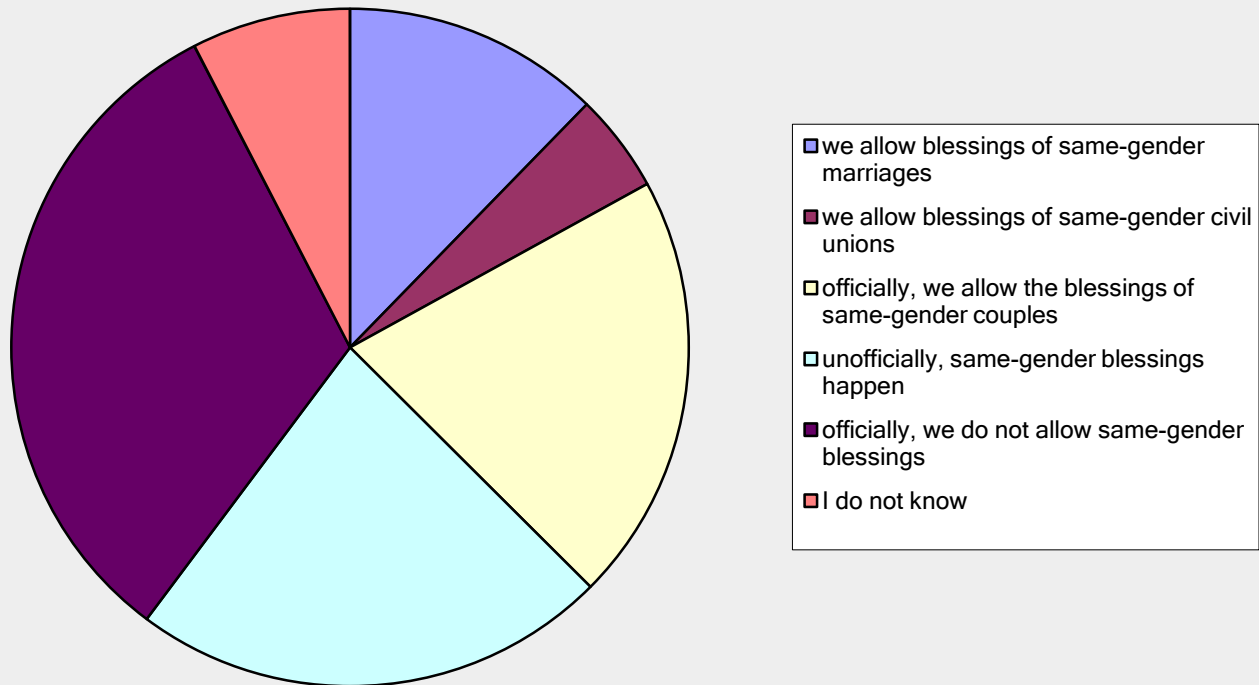


# I live in a state or other civil jurisdiction that relates to this topic in the following way:



# I live in a diocese that relates to this topic in the following way:

SCLM Church-Wide Consultation English Demographic Survey



# Goals for this Gathering

- **Inform** the Deputies about the work of the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music in response to Resolution C056
- **Engage** the Deputies in theological reflection as a Christian community
- **Equip** the Deputies to report to their deputations and engage them in ongoing theological reflection



# Agenda—Today

- Plenary I: Theological Resources
- Small Groups A: Theological Resources
- Plenary II: Liturgical Resources
- Working Dinner
- Small Groups B: Liturgical Resources
- Reception



# Agenda—Tomorrow

- Plenary III: Pastoral and Teaching Resources
- Small Groups C: Pastoral and Teaching Resources
- Plenary IV:
  - Canons/ Legal Issues
  - Wrap-Up





# Plenary I

- Overview of History
- Overview of Legislative Process
- The SCLM and Resolution C056
- Presentation on Theology



# Overview of History

## General Convention Legislation

The Rev. Dr. Ruth Meyers



# General Convention Legislation

- 1976: homosexual persons are children of God who have a full and equal claim with all other persons upon the love, acceptance, and pastoral concern and care of the Church.



# General Convention Legislation

- 2000: we acknowledge that . . . there are couples in the Body of Christ and in this Church who are living in other life-long committed relationships;



# General Convention Legislation

- 2000: we acknowledge that... there are couples in the Body of Christ and in this Church who are living in other life-long committed relationships;
- we expect such 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;



# General Convention Legislation

- 2003: we recognize that local faith communities are operating within the bounds of our common life as they explore and experience liturgies celebrating and blessing same-sex unions



# Overview of Legislative Process

## 1. Legislative Committee

Tom Little, Esq.

Chair, C056 Task Force on  
Canonical and Legal Considerations

*Chancellor, Diocese of Vermont*



# Overview of Legislative Process

## 2. C056 and the House of Bishops

The Rt. Rev. Thomas C. Ely

*Bishop of Vermont*





# INDABA

# Overview of Legislative Process

## 3. C056 and the House of Deputies

Tom Little, Esq.



# The SCLM and Resolution C056

The Rev. Dr. Ruth Meyers

*Chair of the  
Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music*



# C056 Task Groups

Theological Resources

Liturgical Resources

Pastoral and Teaching Resources

Canonical and Legal Considerations



# "open process . . . inviting participation"

- House of Bishops
- Province I Hearing
- Church-Wide Consultation
- Digital Archives



# “inviting theological reflection from throughout the Anglican Communion”

- International Anglican Liturgical Consultation
- Networks of relationships



# Getting to Know Us

Where do you  
come into this history?



# Theological Resources Task Group

The Rev. Dr. Jay Emerson Johnson, Chair

*Diocese of California*

Core Doctoral Faculty Member,  
Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, CA

Senior Director of  
Academic Research and Resources,  
Center for Lesbian and Gay Studies in Religion,  
Pacific School of Religion, Berkeley, CA





# Overview

- Anglican Method
- Baptismal Grounding
- Theological Principles
- “Faith, Hope, and Love”
- Small Group  
Theological Reflection



# Anglican Method

- Rooted in Scripture
- Attentive to Tradition
- Contextualized Today



# Baptismal Grounding

- Sacramental Character
- The Holy Trinity
- Christian Hope



# Theological Reflection on Covenants

- Households
- Eucharist
- The Paschal Mystery



# Summary of Theological Principles

- Vocation
- Covenant-Making
- Households
- Fruitfulness
- Mutual Blessing



# Theological Resources: Essays

- “Faith, Hope, and Love:  
Theological Resources for  
Blessing Same-Gender Unions”



# Small Groups A: Theological Reflection

- Discernment: reflect, listen, share
- Reflecting on our own relationships
- Discerning God's presence in our relationships



# Small Group Breakout Rooms

1: Okefenokee (lower level)  
2: Suwanee (lower level)  
3: Tallulah Falls (lower level)  
4: Lanier A  
5: Lanier B  
6: Savannah A  
7: Savannah B  
8: Savannah C

9: Allatoona  
10: Toccoa  
11: Rabun  
12: Harding  
13: Chattahoochee B  
14: Chattahoochee F  
15: Chattahoochee G





# Small Groups A



# Plenary II

- Report-Back from Small Groups
- Presentation on Liturgy
- Dinner Plan
- Evensong



# Small Group 1

“Covenantal relationships manifest  
God’s presence by giving life through  
forgiveness, joy, and unconditional  
love!”



# Small Group 2

“Covenantal relationships manifest God’s presence by reflecting God’s love to each other and the world around them. ”



# Small Group 3

“Covenantal relationships manifest God’s presence by graceful acceptance, that is, more than tolerance.”



# Small Group 4

“Covenantal relationships manifest God’s presence by mutual love, mutually held beliefs, unconditional love that often includes grace and forgiveness, help in the tough times, and the resilience to continue loving as a person continues to change and grow.”



# Small Group 5

“Covenantal relationships manifest God’s presence by the grace of faithfulness, unconditional love and commitment to the relationship no matter life's challenges.”



# Small Group 6

“Covenantal relationships manifest God’s presence by creating loving households, have many different faces, and require attention to how we engage with one another.”





# Small Group 7

“Covenantal relationships manifest God’s presence by moving us beyond ourselves toward others, and beyond our relationships toward the larger world.”



# Small Group 8

“Covenantal relationships manifest God’s presence by manifesting God's presence by creating households of outreaching and in-drawing hospitality, sacrificial and enduring mutual love, and the sheer grace that is God's gift to them and to the community.”



# Small Group 9

“Covenantal relationships manifest God’s presence by helping us encounter difference and practice Christian virtues —justice, hospitality, reconciliation, generativity. All love comes from God but is manifested to us by other people.”



# Small Group 10

“Covenantal relationships manifest God’s presence by the love expressed in our living breathing flesh and blood relationships.”



# Small Group 11

“Covenantal relationships manifest God’s presence by offering grace and healing for our brokenness.”



# Small Group 12

“Covenantal relationships manifest  
God’s presence by showing us there is  
no “other,” there is “we.”



# Small Group 13

“Covenantal relationships manifest God’s presence by sharing unconditional love, faithfulness and devotion, forgiveness and the surprise of grace, and by bearing fruit.”



# Small Group 14

“Covenantal relationships manifest God’s presence by revealing The God in you who greets, forgives, challenges, completes, listens to, is grateful for, expands ... the God in Me.”





# Small Group 15

“Covenantal relationships manifest God’s presence by stretching our experience of God’s abundance.”



# Liturgical Resources Task Group

The Rev. Dr. Patrick Malloy, Chair

*Diocese of Bethlehem*

H. Boone Porter Chair in Liturgics,  
General Theological Seminary, New York



# Task

“collect and develop . . .  
liturgical resources”



# Existing Resources

Hunch: Significant but modest

Fact: Extensive



# Decisions

- Sift first, write later
- Respect the theological principles
- Formulate liturgical principles
  - Filters
  - Guidelines



# Principles

- Resonance with scripture
- BCP vision
- Anglican style
- Contemporary sensibility
- 3-dimensional product
- Common event
- Particular incarnation
- Symbolic / sacramental couple
- Honest purpose



# Progress

- Outline
- Collection
- Rite



# Remaining

- Review
- Revision
- Resources





# Dinner Plan

Experiences with blessings  
of same-gender couples



# Cena de trabajo

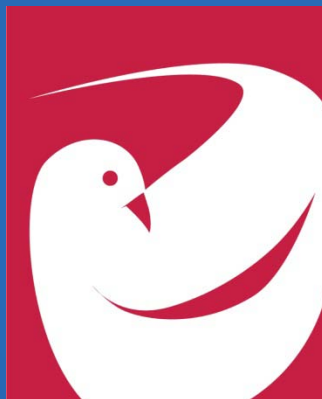
Si desea conversar en español,  
por favor sientese  
en la mesa #1 o #15



# Evensong



# Dinner



# Small Groups B



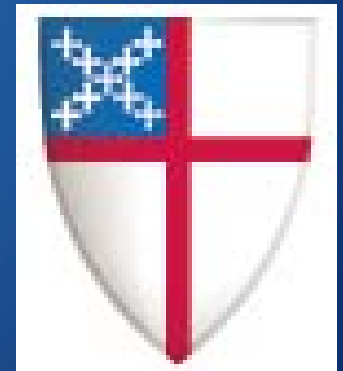
# Church-Wide Consultation on 2009 General Convention Resolution C056, *Liturgies for Blessings*



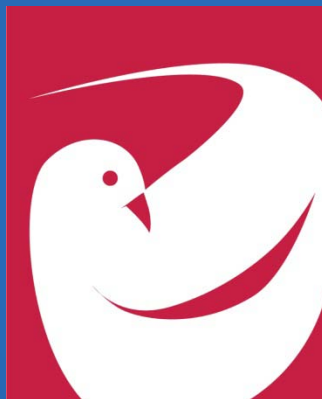
## THE BLESSINGS PROJECT

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The Episcopal Church  
Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music



# Morning Prayer



# Agenda—Today

- Plenary III: Pastoral and Teaching Resources
- Small Groups C: Pastoral and Teaching Resources
- Plenary IV: Canons/ Legal Issues and Wrap-Up





# Pastoral and Teaching Resources Task Group

The Rev. Thaddeus Bennett, Co-Chair

*Diocese of Vermont*

CREDO faculty/consultant, Fresh Start author/faculty/trainer

Recently retired Canon for transition ministry, parish priest

The Rev. Canon Susan Russell, Co-Chair

*Diocese of Los Angeles*

Senior Associate, All Saints Church, Pasadena, CA



# Objectives

Research and provide:

- Teaching materials and resources to help congregations in a discernment process regarding the blessing of same-gender relationships, and
- Excellent pastoral counseling resources for same-gender couples who come to the church for a blessing.



# Commitment: Ask the Whole Church

Primary data sources:

- **House of Bishops**

Fall 2010 Consultation on C056 – 362 Table Notes

- **October 2010 to Jan 2011 Survey**

1131 responses from 111 dioceses and all 9 Provinces  
(see all data on GCO Extranet after this meeting)

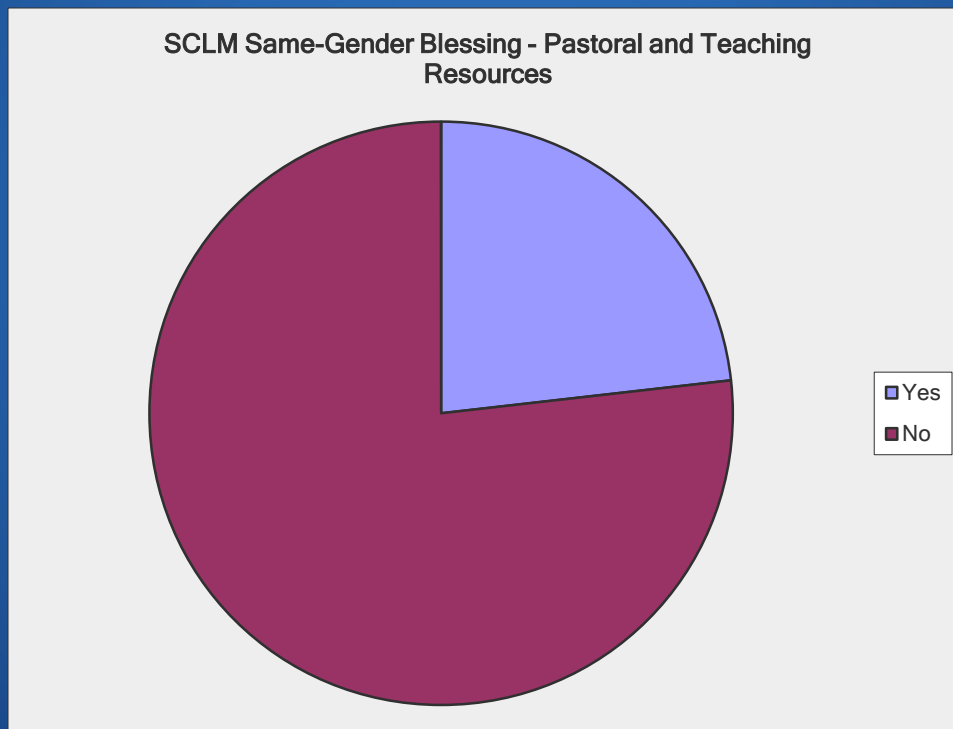
- **Insights and expertise of Task Group Members**



# Has your congregation had a same-gender blessing ceremony?

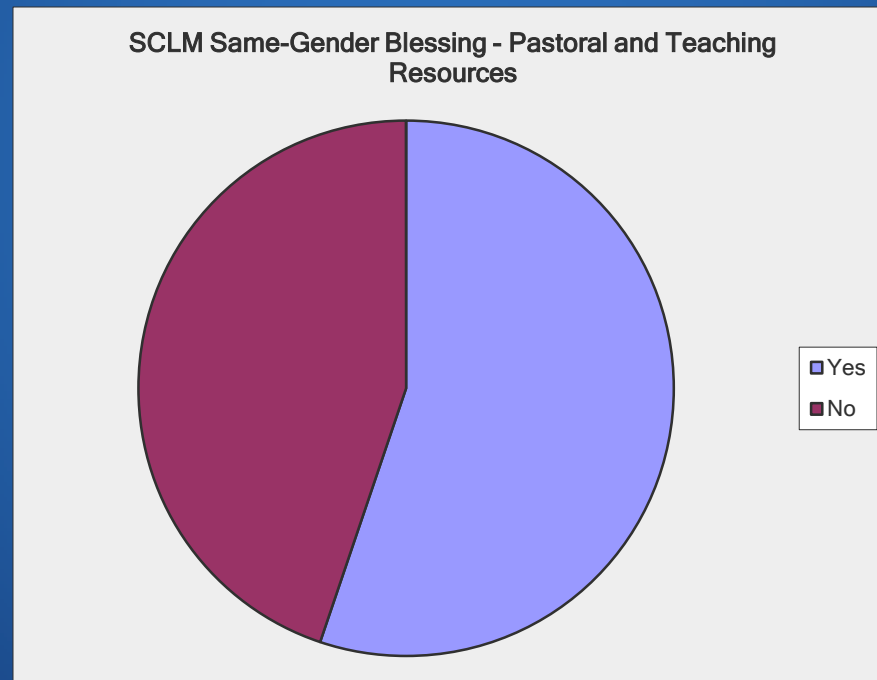
YES 23.2

NO 76.8



Since you have had same-gender blessings:  
Did you or your congregation engage in any education  
and/or discernment process before you decided to have a  
ceremony to bless a same-gender relationship?

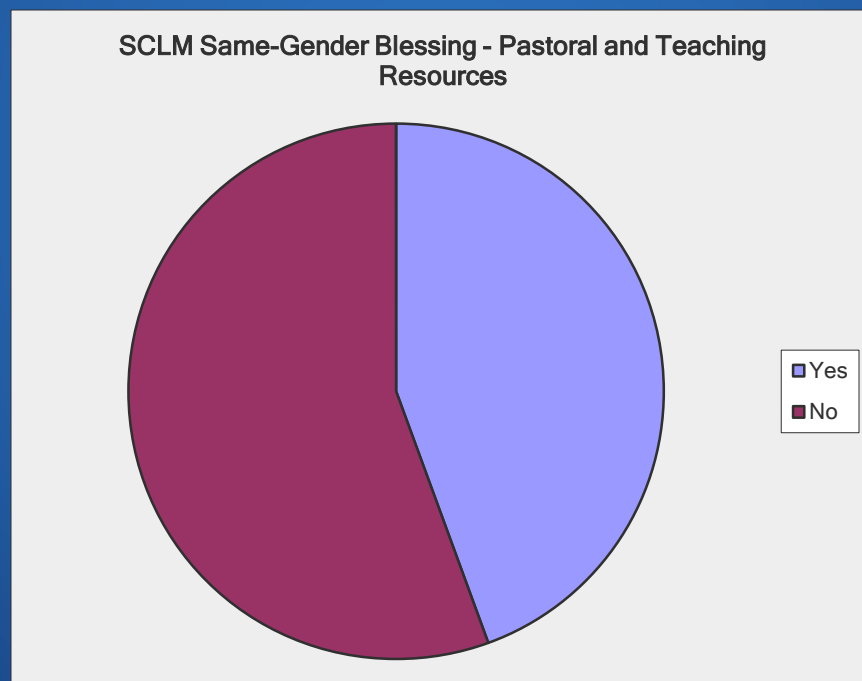
YES 55.2%  
NO 44.8%



Do you or your congregation need educational materials and/or materials to help your whole congregation (adults, youth, and children) consider whether to include same-gender blessings in your congregational life?

YES 44.4%

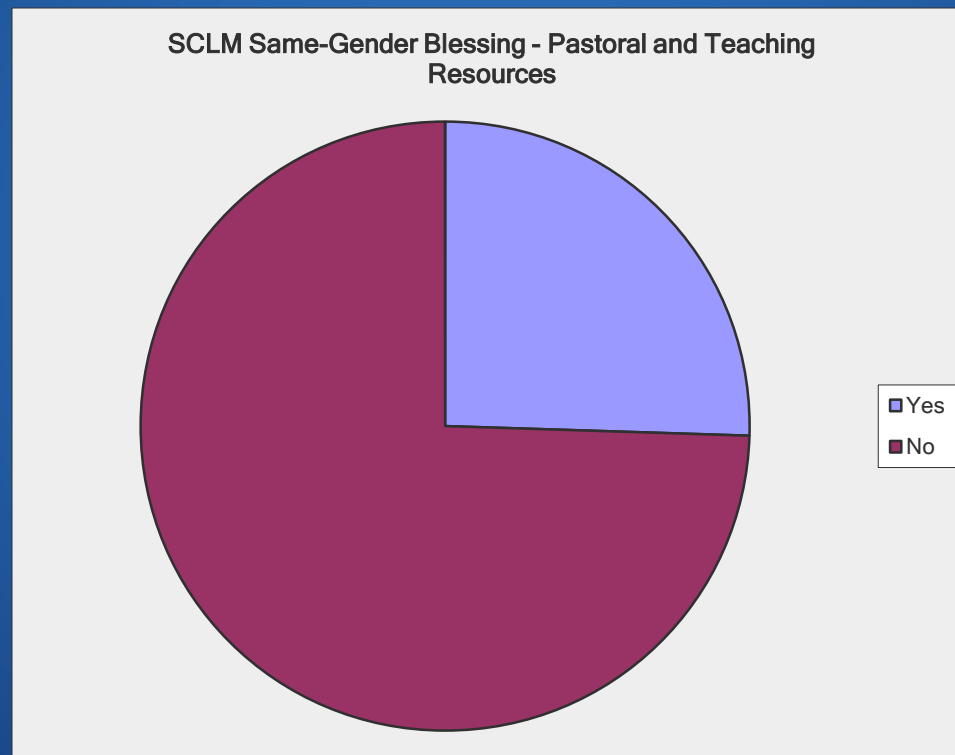
NO 55.6%



# Have you (lay and clergy counselors) prepared same-gender couples for a blessing ceremony?

YES 25.5%

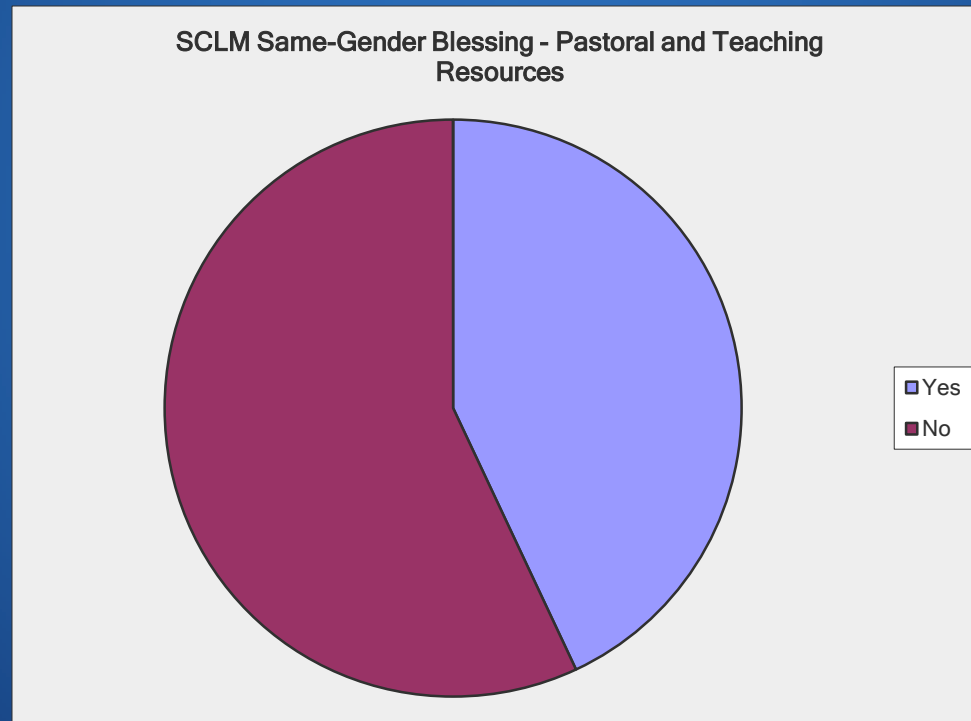
NO 74.5%



Do you (lay and clergy counselors)  
need resources or materials to help prepare  
same-gender couples for a blessing ceremony?

YES 43%

NO 57%







# SurveyMonkey Awards

1131 responses

Top 3 dioceses responding to the survey:

**Third Place: Western Michigan (24)**

**Second Place: Ohio (31)**

**First Place: South Carolina (69)**



# So: Teaching— A Variety of Resources

- Tools for dioceses and congregations about why the church would bless same-gender relationships
- Road-map for discernment—exploring blessings for the same-gender couples in congregations
- Resources for the work of the Theological and Liturgical Task Groups



# So: Pastoral— Need for Specific Materials

- Address some of the differences in preparing same-gender couples than opposite-gender couples
- Adapt the best resources for the Episcopal Church
- We also believe work will help strengthen preparation for all couples



# Test-Driving the Teaching Tools

- The Teaching Materials being designed are intended to lead people thru a discernment process—not to tell them what to think.
- Today we invite you to participate in a “foretaste” of that process with a study guide developed to help you take the SCLM work we’ve been doing here in Atlanta back to your deputation.



Using the brochure outlining the work of the SCLM Blessings Project created for the September meeting of the House of Bishops to frame our conversation, we're going to spend the next hour reflecting on:

- Resolution C056
- Theology
- Liturgies
- Pastoral Response
- Teaching Response
- Canonical Questions
- Process



# Small Groups C



# Plenary IV

- Introduction to Canonical and Legal Resources
- Report-Back from Small Groups
- Taking the Meeting Home
- Closing Remarks
- Closing Worship



# Canonical and Legal Resources Task Group

Tom Little, Esq., Chair

*Diocese of Vermont*

Chancellor, Diocese of Vermont

Member, Standing Commission on the Structure of the Church

Former member, Standing Comm. on Constitution and Canons

Former member, Vermont House of Representatives

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# Question

Do state laws restricting civil marriage to opposite-gender couples present problems or risks for:

- The Church?
- Episcopal clergy performing the blessing ceremonies?



# The First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution

"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof . . ."



# State Law

Some thirty-five states:

- Define marriage as between a man and a woman
- Expressly withhold recognition of a marriage of same-gender persons obtained lawfully in another state or country



# Task Group Conclusion

As long as clergy in "DOMA" states are blessing relationships, rather than purporting to solemnize civil marriages, we anticipate no threat of successful state criminal prosecution or other adverse action against the member of the clergy or his or her church.



# Canon Law

Celebrating a same-gender blessing ceremony using a Church trial liturgy would not be counter to the Canons or *The Book of Common Prayer*—as long as the language of the liturgy does not use marriage terminology (including "husband and wife") of *The Book of Common Prayer*.



# Continuing Work

The Task Group is continuing its research and analysis of:

- The Canons
- The Book of Common Prayer
- State laws

*We welcome your  
comments and suggestions.*



# Report-Back from Small Groups



# GC Resolution C056

Group 1: "Using these questions produced a lively wide-ranging conversation about the polity of our church and the relationship between the General Convention, our dioceses, and the life of our congregations and people in their daily life."

Group 8: "Using these questions produced a great discussion about the importance of our polity, what we cherish about it, how it empowers people for mission and ministry."

Group 15: "Using these questions produced fruitfulness and clarity and a greater awareness of our own local contexts, knowledge and need for resources."





# Theology

Group 2: "Using these questions produced (1) lots of other questions, (2) an awareness of the opportunity and need to greatly simplify the materials to make them more accessible, (3) an awareness of the need for deeper, practical educational resources."

Group 9: "Using these questions produced the need to clarify terminology, possibility of fruitful conversation, and a reminder of the primacy of Scripture."



# Liturgies

Group 3: "Using these questions produced sincere responses, concerned looks at the facets of history, politics and rites with especial concentration on the phrase of 'separate but equal.'"

Group 10: "Using these questions produced as much open and honest conversation as this group has experienced."



# Pastoral Response

Group 4: "Using these questions produced a breadth of experiences and memories: great affection for some, lack of public affection for others; positive witness to the community for some, negative examples for others; mutual support for some, codependence for others; disappointments, including divorce; the inevitable sorrow at the death of a spouse after decades together; and the common thread of endurance and the desire to make a relationship work."

Group 11: "Using these questions produced effectively produced lively discussion in the group that began to broaden the conversation and to delve deeper into the issues."



# Teaching Response

Group 5: “Using these questions produced thoughtful dialogue, respectful disagreement, passionate responses, the sharing of personal stories and theological insights , practical suggestions for teaching on this topic while building community.”

Group 12: “Using these questions produced a conversation that was didactic, energized, categorizing, critical, frustrating, enlightening, passionate, but above all respectful.”



# Canonical Questions

Group 6: "Using these questions produced the realization that the way the questions were titled as canonical was somewhat problematic, as this was clearly a pastoral matter. While there needs to be room for different points of view, the group felt the unity of the church is paramount, and we are best when we wade through our differences with understanding, tolerance, and togetherness. The pastoral component on this issue is paramount, and deep pastoral attentiveness is essential across the board."

Group 13: "Using these questions produced the realization of pain when the discrepancy between desired actions and allowed actions is so great among dioceses, yet we hunger to keep everyone at the table."



# Process

Group 7: “Using these questions produced insistence that the process be as open and broad as possible, focusing on relationships in general and developing lasting habits of respectful conversation about difficult topics.”

Group 14: “Using these questions produced a rich, reflective, open discussion revealing that the journey of the church revealed a broad diversity of experience of engagement with the issue not only of sexuality but of authority, transparency, “gatekeepers,” technology, communication, etc.”



# Taking it Home

How will **you** share  
what you have learned  
with others in your:

Deputation?

Congregation?

Diocese?

Province?



# Taking it Home

## Province I

Byron Rushing

*Diocese of Massachusetts*





# Taking it Home

## Province II

Tobias Haller

*Diocese of New York*



# Taking it Home

Province III

Athena Hahn

*Diocese of Southern Virginia*



# Taking it Home

Province IV

Sam Candler

*Diocese of Atlanta*



# Taking it Home

Province V

Sue Perkinson

*Diocese of Ohio*



# Taking it Home

## Province VI

Cathleen Bascom

*Diocese of Iowa*



# Taking it Home

Province VII

Katie Sherrod

*Diocese of Fort Worth*



# Taking it Home

Province VIII

Carolyn Gaines

*Diocese of California*



# Taking it Home

## Province IX

Emily Morales

*Diocese of Puerto Rico*





# Feedback?

- SurveyMonkey tool:  
URL posted on Extranet
- Email the SCLM:  
[sclm@episcopalchurch.org](mailto:sclm@episcopalchurch.org)

## Archived Webcast

[www.episcopalchurch.org/live/sclm](http://www.episcopalchurch.org/live/sclm)



# Closing Remarks

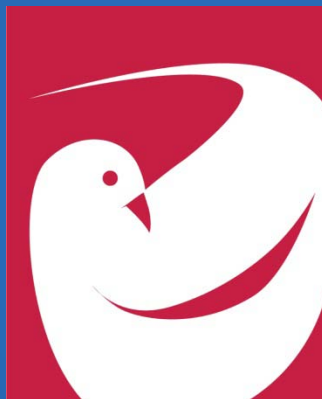
Dr. Bonnie Anderson

President, House of Deputies

*Diocese of Michigan*



# Closing Worship



# Thank you!

## *Go in peace*



### THE BLESSINGS PROJECT

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The Episcopal Church  
Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music



Questions  
about this presentation or  
The Blessings Project?

Contact:  
The Rev. Keri Aubert  
Blessings Project Manager  
Church Divinity School of the Pacific  
2451 Ridge Road  
Berkeley, CA 94709  
(510) 204-0740  
kaubert@cdsp.edu



Diocese	Province	Attendees	Status	Type
Convocation of American Churches in Europe	II	Luk De Volder	Deputy	C
Convocation of American Churches in Europe	II	Tiffany Israel	Deputy	L
Diocese of Alabama	IV	John Fritschner	Deputy	C
Diocese of Alabama	IV	Marcellus (Mark) Smith	Deputy	L
Diocese of Alaska	VIII	Stacy Thorpe	Deputy	L
Diocese of Albany	II	Deborah Fish	Deputy	L
Diocese of Albany	II	Scott Garno	Deputy	C
Diocese of Arizona	VIII	Nicholas Knisely	Deputy	C
Diocese of Arizona	VIII	Judith Conley	Deputy	L
Diocese of Arkansas	VII	Lowell E. Grisham	Deputy	C
Diocese of Arkansas	VII	Beth Matthews	Deputy	L
Diocese of Atlanta	IV	Sam Candler	Deputy	C
Diocese of Atlanta	IV	Mac Thigpen	Deputy	C
Diocese of Atlanta	IV	Angela Williamson	Deputy	L
Diocese of Bethlehem	III	Anne E. Kitch	Deputy	C
Diocese of Bethlehem	III	Elizabeth H. House	Deputy	L
Diocese of California	VIII	Paul Fromberg	Deputy	C
Diocese of California	VIII	Carolyn Gaines	Deputy	L
Diocese of Central Florida	IV	James (Jim) Sorvillo	Deputy	C
Diocese of Central Florida	IV	Sonya Shannon	Deputy	L
Diocese of Central Gulf Coast	IV	Thack H. Dyson	Deputy	C
Diocese of Central Gulf Coast	IV	David R. Quittmeyer	Deputy	L
Diocese of Central New York	II	Georgina Hegney	Deputy	C
Diocese of Central New York	II	Felicity Hallanan	Deputy	L
Diocese of Central Pennsylvania	III	Harry Snell	Deputy	L
Diocese of Chicago	V	Shawn M. Schreiner	Deputy	C
Diocese of Chicago	V	Ian Hallas	Deputy	L
Diocese of Colorado	VI	Ruth Woodliff-Stanley	Deputy	C
Diocese of Colorado	VI	Zoe Cole	Deputy	L
Diocese of Connecticut	I	Linda Spiers	Deputy	C
Diocese of Connecticut	I	Theodore Mollegen	Deputy	L
Diocese of Dallas	VII	Victoria Heard	Deputy	C
Diocese of Dallas	VII	Bill Murchison	Deputy	L
Diocese of Delaware	III	Bradley Hinton	Deputy	C
Diocese of Delaware	III	Maureen Lyons	Deputy	L
Diocese of East Carolina	IV	Joseph M. Browne	Deputy	C
Diocese of East Carolina	IV	Susan T. Holmes	Deputy	L
Diocese of East Tennessee	IV	Maggie Zeller	Deputy	C
Diocese of East Tennessee	IV	Lynn Schmissrauter	Deputy	L
Diocese of Eastern Michigan	V	Rob Skirving	Deputy	C
Diocese of Eastern Michigan	V	Michael Spencer	Deputy	L
Diocese of Eastern Oregon	VIII	Ted Rodrigues	Deputy	C
Diocese of Eastern Oregon	VIII	John Adams	Deputy	L
Diocese of Easton	III	Frieda L. Malcolm	Deputy	C
Diocese of Easton	III	C. Edward Vance	Deputy	L
Diocese of Eau Claire	V	Scott Kirby	Deputy	C
Diocese of Eau Claire	V	Eileen Yeakley	Deputy	L
Diocese of El Camino Real	VIII	Mary Morrison	Deputy	C
Diocese of El Camino Real	VIII	Jeff Diehl	Deputy	L
Diocese of Florida	IV	Ted J. Monica	Deputy	C
Diocese of Florida	IV	Debby Melnyk	Deputy	L
Diocese of Fort Worth	VII	Katie Sherrod	Deputy	L
Diocese of Fort Worth	VII	Fred Barber	Deputy	C
Diocese of Hawaii	VIII	Benjamin Howard Nelson	Deputy	C

Diocese	Province	Attendees	Status	Type
Diocese of Hawaii	VIII	Louise Lani Aloy	Deputy	L
Diocese of Idaho	VIII	Holladay Sanderson	Deputy	C
Diocese of Idaho	VIII	Nancy Koonce	Deputy	L
Diocese of Indianapolis	V	Thomas William Blake	Deputy	C
Diocese of Indianapolis	V	Theresa (Terry) Noble	Deputy	L
Diocese of Iowa	VI	Cathleen Bascom	Deputy	C
Diocese of Iowa	VI	Ellen Bruckner	Deputy	L
Diocese of Kansas	VII	Craig Loya	Deputy	C
Diocese of Kansas	VII	Larry Bingham	Deputy	L
Diocese of Kentucky	IV	Mary Abrams	Deputy	C
Diocese of Kentucky	IV	Sam Dorr	Deputy	L
Diocese of Lexington	IV	Bob L. Sessum	Deputy	C
Diocese of Lexington	IV	Mary T. Yeiser	Deputy	L
Diocese of Litoral Ecuador	IX	Jaime Davila Vazquez	Deputy	C
Diocese of Litoral Ecuador	IX	Olga de Jesus Morante Arevalo	Deputy	L
Diocese of Long Island	II	P Allister Rawlins	Deputy	C
Diocese of Long Island	II	Frederick Gerbracht	Deputy	L
Diocese of Los Angeles	VIII	Altagracia Perez	Deputy	C
Diocese of Los Angeles	VIII	Jim White	Deputy	L
Diocese of Maine	I	Benjamin Shambaugh	Deputy	C
Diocese of Maine	I	Rita Redfield	Deputy	L
Diocese of Maryland	III	Allen F. Robinson	Deputy	C
Diocese of Maryland	III	Alma T. Bell	Deputy	L
Diocese of Massachusetts	I	Karen Montagno	Deputy	C
Diocese of Massachusetts	I	Byron Rushing	Deputy	L
Diocese of Michigan	V	Lisa Gray	Deputy	C
Diocese of Michigan	V	Pete Ross	Deputy	L
Diocese of Milwaukee	V	Andy Jones	Deputy	C
Diocese of Milwaukee	V	Bill Robison	Deputy	L
Diocese of Minnesota	VI	Devon Anderson	Deputy	C
Diocese of Minnesota	VI	James Huber	Deputy	L
Diocese of Mississippi	IV	Anita P. George	Deputy	L
Diocese of Missouri	V	Tamsen Whistler	Deputy	C
Diocese of Missouri	V	Lisa Fox	Deputy	L
Diocese of Montana	VI	Sandy Williams	Deputy	L
Diocese of Nebraska	VI	Dana "Woody" Bradford	Deputy	L
Diocese of Nevada	VIII	Stefani Schatz	Deputy	C
Diocese of Nevada	VIII	Margaret Bouzek	Deputy	L
Diocese of New Hampshire	I	Susan Langle	Deputy	C
Diocese of New Jersey	II	John (Jack) Zamboni	Deputy	C
Diocese of New Jersey	II	Noreen Duncan	Deputy	L
Diocese of New York	II	Tobias Haller	Deputy	C
Diocese of New York	II	Michael Wood	Deputy	L
Diocese of Newark	II	Erik Soldwedel	Deputy	C
Diocese of Newark	II	Marge Christie	Deputy	L
Diocese of North Carolina	IV	Beth Ely	Deputy	C
Diocese of North Carolina	IV	Alice Freeman	Deputy	L
Diocese of North Dakota	VI	John Baird	Deputy	L
Diocese of Northern California	VIII	Brian Baker	Deputy	C
Diocese of Northern California	VIII	Thea Mangels	Deputy	L
Diocese of Northern Michigan	V	Richard Graybill	Deputy	C
Diocese of Northern Michigan	V	Jane Cisluycis	Deputy	L
Diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania	III	John P. Downey	Deputy	C
Diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania	III	James Steadman	Deputy	L

Diocese	Province	Attendees	Status	Type
Diocese of Ohio	V	Evelyn Manzella	Deputy	C
Diocese of Ohio	V	Susannah (Sue) Perkinson	Deputy	L
Diocese of Oklahoma	VII	Irv Cutter	Deputy	C
Diocese of Oklahoma	VII	Bill Cathcart	Deputy	L
Diocese of Olympia	VIII	Hunt Priest	Deputy	C
Diocese of Olympia	VIII	Katrina Hamilton	Deputy	L
Diocese of Oregon	VIII	Caroline Litzenberger	Deputy	C
Diocese of Oregon	VIII	Sharon Rogers	Deputy	L
Diocese of Pennsylvania	III	Rodger Broadley	Deputy	C
Diocese of Pennsylvania	III	Christopher Hart	Deputy	L
Diocese of Pittsburgh	III	Scott Quinn	Deputy	C
Diocese of Pittsburgh	III	Andy Muhl	Deputy	L
Diocese of Puerto Rico	IX	Emily Morales	Deputy	C
Diocese of Puerto Rico	IX	Walmarie Gerardino	Deputy	L
Diocese of Quincy	V	Tobyn Leigh Miracle	Deputy	L
Diocese of Rhode Island	I	Scott Gunn	Deputy	C
Diocese of Rhode Island	I	Dante Tavolaro	Deputy	L
Diocese of Rio Grande	VII	Scott A. Ruthven	Deputy	C
Diocese of Rio Grande	VII	Diane Butler	Deputy	L
Diocese of Rochester	II	Brad Benson	Deputy	C
Diocese of Rochester	II	Neil Houghton	Deputy	L
Diocese of San Diego	VIII	Allisyn Thomas	Deputy	C
Diocese of San Diego	VIII	Suzanne Foucault	Deputy	L
Diocese of San Joaquin	VIII	Luis Rodriguez	Deputy	C
Diocese of San Joaquin	VIII	Carolyn Woodall	Deputy	L
Diocese of South Carolina	IV	David Thurlow	Deputy	C
Diocese of South Carolina	IV	Elizabeth Pennewill	Deputy	L
Diocese of South Dakota	VI	Ward Simpson	Deputy	C
Diocese of South Dakota	VI	Dennis Potter	Deputy	L
Diocese of Southeast Florida	IV	Jennie Lou Reid	Deputy	C
Diocese of Southeast Florida	IV	Thomas G. O'Brien III	Deputy	L
Diocese of Southern Ohio	V	R. William Carroll	Deputy	C
Diocese of Southern Ohio	V	Donald R. Reed	Deputy	L
Diocese of Southern Virginia	III	John A. Baldwin	Deputy	C
Diocese of Southern Virginia	III	Athena Hahn	Deputy	L
Diocese of Southwest Florida	IV	Cesar Olivero	Deputy	C
Diocese of Southwest Florida	IV	Navita James	Deputy	L
Diocese of Southwestern Virginia	III	Deborah Hunley	Deputy	C
Diocese of Southwestern Virginia	III	Nina V. Salmon	Deputy	L
Diocese of Spokane	VIII	Robin Biffle	Deputy	C
Diocese of Spokane	VIII	Mary Beth Jorgensen	Deputy	L
Diocese of Tennessee	IV	Vicki Burgess	Deputy	C
Diocese of Tennessee	IV	W. A. (Pete) Stringer	Deputy	L
Diocese of Texas	VII	Joe Reynolds	Deputy	C
Diocese of Texas	VII	Mary Parmer	Deputy	L
Diocese of the Virgin Islands	II	Edward H. Thompson	Deputy	C
Diocese of the Virgin Islands	II	David Isaac	Deputy	L
Diocese of Upper South Carolina	IV	Sally Johnston	Deputy	C
Diocese of Upper South Carolina	IV	Angela M. Daniel	Deputy	L
Diocese of Utah	VIII	Lee Shaw	Deputy	C
Diocese of Utah	VIII	Barbara Losse	Deputy	L
Diocese of Vermont	I	Reid Farrell	Deputy	C
Diocese of Vermont	I	Anne Brown	Deputy	L
Diocese of Virginia	III	Lynne Washington	Deputy	C



Diocese	Province	Attendees	Status	Type
Diocese of Virginia	III	Cindi Bartol	Deputy	L
Diocese of Washington	III	Jan Cope	Deputy	C
Diocese of Washington	III	Barbara Miles	Deputy	L
Diocese of West Missouri	VII	Jonathan E. Frazier	Deputy	C
Diocese of West Missouri	VII	Carole Pryor	Deputy	L
Diocese of West Tennessee	IV	John P. Leach	Deputy	C
Diocese of West Tennessee	IV	C. Bradford Foster III	Deputy	L
Diocese of West Virginia	III	Beth Marquart	Deputy	L
Diocese of Western Kansas	VII	Dennis Zimmerman	Deputy	C
Diocese of Western Kansas	VII	Sally Russell	Deputy	L
Diocese of Western Louisiana	VII	Guido Verbeck	Deputy	C
Diocese of Western Louisiana	VII	Don Palombo	Deputy	L
Diocese of Western Massachusetts	I	Tanya Wallace	Deputy	C
Diocese of Western Massachusetts	I	John Cheek	Deputy	L
Diocese of Western Michigan	V	Laurel Dahill	Deputy	C
Diocese of Western Michigan	V	William Spaid	Deputy	C
Diocese of Western New York	II	Colleen O'Connor	Deputy	C
Diocese of Western New York	II	Catherine Way	Deputy	L
Diocese of Western North Carolina	IV	Mike Cogsdale	Deputy	C
Diocese of Western North Carolina	IV	Diane Mance	Deputy	L
Diocese of Wyoming	VI	Kay Rohde (Katherine Mary)	Deputy	C
Diocese of Wyoming	VI	Ellen Honsaker	Deputy	L
Ecumenical Guest - ELCA		Scott Weidler	Ecumenical Guest	
Ecumenical Guest - N Prov, Moravian Church of NA		Paul Peucker	Ecumenical Guest	
Ecumenical Guest - PCUSA		Kimberly Bracken Long	Ecumenical Guest	
Extra Support - Atlanta	IV	Beth Knowlton	Atlanta Support	C
GCO - Easton	III	Gregory Straub	GCO	C
National Church - California	VIII	Bob Honeychurch	National Church	C
SCLM - Alabama	IV	Kee Sloan	SCLM	C
SCLM - Bethlehem	III	Pat Malloy	SCLM	C
SCLM - California	VIII	Jay Johnson	SCLM	C
SCLM - California	VIII	Louis Weil	SCLM	C
SCLM - Chicago	V	Dent Davidson	SCLM	L
SCLM - Chicago	V	Ellen Wondra	SCLM	C
SCLM - Colorado	VI	Larry Hitt	SCLM	L
SCLM - Colorado	VI	Jack Finlaw	SCLM	L
SCLM - Colorado	VI	Andrew Cooley	SCLM	C
SCLM - Convocation of Episcopal Churches in Europe	II	Pierre Whalon	SCLM	C
SCLM - Delaware	III	Greg Howe	SCLM	C
SCLM - East Carolina	IV	Joan Geiszler-Ludlum	SCLM	L
SCLM - El Camino Real	VIII	Mary Gray-Reeves	SCLM	C
SCLM - Iowa	VI	Raisin Horn	SCLM	C
SCLM - Los Angeles	VIII	Susan Russell	SCLM	C
SCLM - Massachusetts	I	Gale Yee	SCLM	L
SCLM - Michigan	V	Bonnie Anderson	SCLM	L
SCLM - Michigan	V	John Repulski	SCLM	L
SCLM - Michigan	V	Bonnie Anderson	SCLM	L
SCLM - Missouri	V	Heidi Clark	SCLM	L
SCLM - Missouri	V	Martha Baker	SCLM	L
SCLM - New Hampshire	I	Mark Jenkins	SCLM	C
SCLM - New Jersey	II	Susan Ironside	SCLM	C
SCLM - New York	II	Frank Tedeschi	SCLM	L
SCLM - New York	II	Bowie Snodgrass	SCLM	L
SCLM - Newark	II	Sandy Wilson	SCLM	C

Diocese	Province	Attendees	Status	Type
SCLM - North Carolina	IV	Gene Rogers	SCLM	L
SCLM - Oregon	VIII	Gabriel Lamazares	SCLM	C
SCLM - Puerto Rico	IX	Ivette Linares	SCLM	C
SCLM - Rhode Island	I	Jennifer Phillips	SCLM	C
SCLM - Rio Grande	VII	Brian Taylor	SCLM	C
SCLM - Rochester	II	Michael Hopkins	SCLM	C
SCLM - Southern Virginia	III	Christopher Hamlett	SCLM	C
SCLM - Texas	VII	Sandra Montes	SCLM	L
SCLM - Texas	VII	Jaime Case	SCLM	C
SCLM - Uppper South Carolina	IV	Mary Catherine Young	SCLM	C
SCLM - Vermont	I	Thaddeus Bennett	SCLM	C
SCLM - Vermont	I	Thomas Little	SCLM	L
SCLM - Vermont	I	Keri Aubert	SCLM	C
SCLM - Vermont	I	Tom Ely	SCLM	C
SCLM - Vermont	I	Stannard "Stan" Baker	SCLM	C
SCLM - Washington	III	Susan Blue	SCLM	C
SCLM - Western North Carolina	IV	Thomas Brackett	SCLM	C

**FINAL NUMBERS**

Deputies attending (not counting SCLM/C056 members)	<b>184</b>
SCLM and C056 task group members	43
General Convention Office	1
National Church	1
Atlanta Support	1
Ecumenical Guests	3
<b>Total number attending</b>	<b>233</b>
<b>Dioceses sending deputies</b>	<b>96</b>

**Dioceses not represented**

Diocese of Central Ecuador	IX
Diocese of Colombia	IX
Diocese of Fond du Lac	V
Diocese of Georgia	IV
Diocese of Haiti	II
Diocese of Honduras	IX
Diocese of Louisiana	IV
Diocese of Northern Indiana	V
Diocese of Northwest Texas	VII
Diocese of Republic Dominicana	IX
Diocese of Springfield	V
Diocese of Taiwan	VIII
Diocese of Venezuela	IX
Diocese of West Texas	VII
Episcopal Church in Micronesia	
Navajoland Area Mission	VIII