
From: Bishop Mary Gray-Reeves [mailto:BishopMary@edecr.org]
Sent: Tuesday, January 22, 2013 12:33 PM
To: Meyers, Ruth
Subject: RE: Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music

Dear Ruth,

I hope you are well. I am looking forward to seeing you on Thursday. I still have to formulate what I am going to say since this is not a big deal in our diocese.

For purposes of the email below, I am working on a contact person; probably the priest who chaired our Task Force on Marriage. The policy though now, is contained in my customary (ie., I did not do a separate write-up because we have been blessing these relationships before I arrived in ECR), which is attached. The relevant segment is in this email.

We have had little pushback here. I am planning a day on pre-marital/blessings prep. I think what we have not ventured into is the cultural differences generationally, but also in terms of sexuality as to what is normative/healthy/typical in each context. There is much more variety these days than the canons presume!

So, this is where we are now...

Thanks for your work on this – see you Thursday!

Mary

MARRIAGE and SAME-SEX BLESSINGS

In this diocese, we adhere to the Canons for Marriage, including using the authorized liturgies from the Book of Common Prayer. As an Episcopal clergyperson, you are meant to use only BCP or other General Convention approved texts.

At this time, the State of California does not allow marriage for same-sex couples. In the Diocese of El Camino Real, however, we have blessed these faithful relationships for some years now. It is my policy that same-sex couples should be treated in the same canonical manner as heterosexual couples regarding previous relationships, children, and the understanding of what it means to be in a monogamous Christian partnership. As well, clergy should have the agreement of the Vestry or Bishop's Committee since the joining in blessing and in marriage is a community event. The Liturgy for Same-Sex Blessings, "The Witnessing and Blessing of a Lifelong Covenant" has now been approved by our General Convention and is the authorized liturgy for blessing same-sex couples. I encourage you to utilize the resources created to accompany this work, "I Will Bless You and You Will be a Blessing", as well as review the final resolution of this major shift in the pastoral offerings of our church (this resource may be found online and was included in The Good News Along the King's Highway Friday, December 7, 2012).