

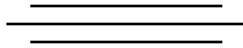
**The Standing Commission
on Liturgy and Music**

of

The Episcopal Church

responds to

**2009 General Convention
Resolution C056:
Liturgies for Blessings
(of Same-Gender Relationships)**



The Episcopal Church
Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music
September 2010

The General Convention Charge to the SCLM

2009 General Convention Resolution C056 charges the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music (SCLM) with two tasks regarding the blessing of same-gender relationships:

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 [in 2012]

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**

How the SCLM Plans to Meet These Goals

To meet these goals, the SCLM is preparing:

- One or more theological essays setting forth scriptural and theological foundations for blessing same-gender relationships
- One or more rites for blessing same-gender relationships
- A set of pastoral and teaching resources that will assist clergy and congregations considering hosting such blessings
- Comments on the canonical and legal implications of blessing same-gender relationships in varying civil jurisdictions

The SCLM anticipates developing these materials as an addition to the *Enriching Our Worship* series. For almost twenty years, the SCLM has used the *Enriching Our Worship* series for materials that supplement the *Book of Common Prayer*. As with all supplemental liturgical materials, official resources for blessing same-gender relationships can be authorized for use in the Episcopal Church only by action of General Convention. The SCLM expects that its report on Resolution C056 to the 2012 General Convention will include a proposed volume of *Enriching Our Worship*. The Convention will then decide how to respond.

Collecting and Developing Resources

To manage the collection and development of resources related to same-gender blessings, the SCLM has organized four Task Groups:

- Theological Resources
- Liturgical Resources
- Pastoral and Teaching Resources
- Canonical and Legal Considerations

These Task Groups are staffed with representatives from around the Episcopal Church. In forming them, the SCLM was mindful of the many diversities of the Episcopal Church, including age, sex, race/ethnicity, geography, and sexual orientation. It sought the wisdom of lay persons, parish clergy, and theologians. Information about the SCLM and the C056 Task Groups is available on the website of the Executive Offices of the General Convention (www.generalconvention.org).

Consulting the Bishops

The SCLM has worked closely on this project with its members from the House of Bishops. It invited each Diocesan Bishop to provide information about their pastoral response to same-gender couples seeking a blessing of their relationship and any resources commended to their Diocese. During its fall 2010 meeting, the House of Bishops consulted with the SCLM about its work on Resolution C056. The SCLM plans to continue contact with this body and also invites each bishop to contribute resources and additionally participate using the avenues described below.

Opening the Process

To maintain openness and transparency in the SCLM's work:

- Information about the C056 Task Groups is available on the General Convention Office website (www.generalconvention.org)
- The SCLM has created a blog (www.liturgyandmusic.wordpress.com) to both provide information and invite comment
- Materials associated with this project will continue to be posted on the College for Bishops website
- The Archives of the Episcopal Church is creating a digital archive of materials associated with this project

Inviting Participation

The SCLM plan includes extensive solicitation of input from around the Episcopal Church and the broader Anglican Communion, including:

- Hearing with representatives of the Dioceses of Province I, which was chosen because many of its states offer legal recognition of same-gender relationships (October 2010)
- Church-wide consultation that includes one lay and one clergy deputy from each Diocese (March 2011)
- Opportunities for reflection with liturgical scholars and other lay and ordained leaders from around the Anglican Communion (2011)
- Presentation at each Provincial Synod meeting (fall 2011 through spring 2012)

In addition, individuals may participate through:

- Following and contributing to the SCLM blog, created to share resources and solicit comment related to same-gender blessings (www.liturgyandmusic.wordpress.com)
- E-mailing resources to the SCLM (Ruth Meyers, Chair) (sclm@episcopalchurch.org)

Funding the Project

Significant funds are required to attain the high level of participation needed for this work. The church-wide consultation is an especially costly event. The Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society contracted with Church Divinity School of the Pacific (CDSP) to support this work. CDSP has secured a major grant from the Arcus Foundation and is seeking additional funding.

**Please participate in the SCLM's
work on same-gender blessings!**

Visit the SCLM blog:
www.liturgyandmusic.wordpress.com

E-mail the SCLM:
sclm@episcopalchurch.org