



Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music
of the Episcopal Church
THE BLESSINGS PROJECT

Responding to General Convention Resolution 2009 - C056: Resources for the Blessing of Same-Gender Relationships

Preparing for General Convention
Educational Material for Diocesan Conventions
or congregational meetings held before the release of the Commission's Final Report

OVERVIEW

We are making this packet of material available to Diocesan Deputations who might like to engage their Diocesan Convention in some conversation about the SCLM's response to C056. We assume that at least one member of the deputation attended the Atlanta Consultation in March of this year and thus has a broad overview of the work of the SCLM. **NOTE: The outlines provided here are matched with PowerPoint presentations that we have also attached.**

We are providing 3 separate presentations and expect that you will choose one for use at your convention. We completely understand that convention time is valuable and even one presentation might be too much. At the end of each presentation we invite you to collect from members of your convention their top 2 or three learnings from the process. Please share them with us at the SCLM as part of our open process.

Finally, we know this is short notice and believe the material can also be used by congregations interested in having conversations about the work of the SCLM.

If you have any questions, please contact:

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Understanding Resolution 2009-C056

Purpose: To engage members of a diocese in understanding the charge given in the resolution and the way the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music responded.

Preparation: Ask one member of the General Convention Deputation to be ready to introduce the process and material. S/he should also be the time keeper. This "table discussion format" is designed for between 10 and 15 minutes, as we assume convention timing is tight. Have copies of the C056 Resolution on the tables (or if people are seated in rows, given to them ahead of time) and ask them to follow the discussion format either presented on the PowerPoint presentation or copied on back of the handout. If people are not at tables, invite them to form small clusters of 3 or 4 people.

1. Briefly explain why the Deputation is doing this (open process; want Episcopalians engaging the material; want feedback, etc.) Ask people to be open and respectful of diverse opinions. Explain this is a "taste" of the type of process in which the SCLM hopes the church will engage.
2. Show the slide which gives a brief history of how the Episcopal Church got to C056. If you are not using PowerPoint read them the items.
3. Then, ask everyone to read Resolution 2009-C056 and ask them briefly to discuss:
 - ❖ What are the "action items" this resolution calls for?
 - ❖ What would you have expected the SCLM to do?
4. After about 5 minutes ask the members of the convention to draw their attention to the next PowerPoint slide and show them the process in which the SCLM engaged. If you are not using PowerPoint read them the items.

Wrap up the exercise and invite members to jot down and give to the Deputation a list of the two or three most important things they learned from the conversation. Let them know that you will share that information with the SCLM as part of the ongoing open process leading to General Convention. Direct them to the SCLM website for further study.



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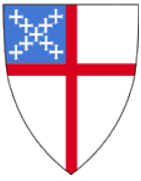
Theological Reflection on Covenantal Relationships

Purpose: To engage members of a diocese in brief theological reflection upon the work of the Commission and encourage them to further study after the full report is released.

Preparation: Ask one member of the General Convention Deputation to be ready to explain about C056, the charge to the SCLM and then introduce the process and material. (NOTE: These three explanations are available on the accompanying PowerPoint). S/he should also be the time keeper. This "table discussion format" is designed for between 10 and 15 minutes, as we assume convention timing is tight. Have copies of the one-page SCLM document *Theological Reflection on Covenantal Relationships: A Summary of "Faith, Hope, and Love"* on the tables (or if people are seated in rows, given to them ahead of time) and ask them to follow the discussion format either presented on the PowerPoint presentation or copied on back of the handout. If people are not at tables, invite them to form small clusters of 3 or 4 people.

1. Briefly explain why the Deputation is doing this (open process; want Episcopalians engaging the material; want feedback, etc.). Ask people to be open and respectful of diverse opinions. Explain this is a "taste" of the type of process in which the SCLM hopes the church will engage.
2. Quickly show the process that got us here via General Convention resolutions and the SCLM's charge and work on C056.
3. Invite people to briefly review the theological themes that the Commission has articulated for same-gender relationships in the SCLM document *Theological Reflection on Covenantal Relationships: A Summary of "Faith, Hope, and Love"*. Then, ask participants to share:
 - ❖ Which of these themes (covenant, household, vocation, fruitfulness, mutual blessing) speak most directly to your own experience of relationship, either your own or a relationship in your community?
 - ❖ Could these same themes apply to same-gender couples and/or what other ways would you describe the spiritual significance of such committed relationships in the life of your community?

After about 10-15 minutes, wrap up the exercise and invite members to jot down and give to the Deputation a list of the two or three most important things they learned from the conversation. Let them know that you will share that information with the SCLM as part of the ongoing open process leading to General Convention. Direct them to the SCLM website for further study.



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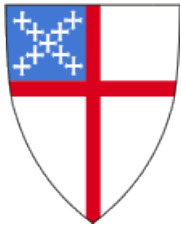
Principles for Evaluating Liturgical Materials

Purpose: To engage members of a diocese in brief liturgical reflection upon the work of the Commission and encourage them to further study after the full report is released.

Preparation: Ask one member of the General Convention Deputation to be ready to explain about C056, the charge to the SCLM and then introduce the process and material. (NOTE: These three explanations are available on the accompanying PowerPoint). S/he should also be the time keeper. This "table discussion format" is designed for between 10 and 15 minutes, as we assume convention timing is tight. Have copies of the one-page SCLM *Principles for Evaluating Liturgical Materials* on the tables (or if people are seated in rows, given to them ahead of time) and ask them to follow the discussion format either presented on the PowerPoint presentation or copied on back of the handout. If people are not at tables, invite them to form small clusters of 3 or 4 people.

1. Briefly explain why the Deputation is doing this (open process; want Episcopalians engaging the material; want feedback, etc.) Ask people to be open and respectful of diverse opinions. Explain this is a "taste" of the type of process in which the SCLM hopes the church will engage.
2. Quickly show the process that got us here via General Convention resolutions and the SCLM's charge and work on C056.
3. Ask participants to briefly review the SCLM document, *Principles for Evaluating Liturgical Materials* and then to reflect upon an Episcopal liturgy (such as a wedding, blessing, baptism or Eucharist) they have recently attended or that is particularly memorable, using this question:
 - What was it about the liturgy that was most memorable or that has remained with you to this day? Do any of the "qualities" noted in the SCLM document show up for you?
 - Might such qualities also be present in a liturgy for blessing of a same-gender relationship?

After about 10-15 minutes, wrap up the exercise and invite members to jot down and give to the Deputation a list of the two or three most important things they learned from the conversation. Let them know that you will share that information with the SCLM as part of the ongoing open process leading to General Convention. Direct them to the SCLM website for further study.



Resolution 2009-C056

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.

SCLM Website: <http://liturgyandmusic.wordpress.com/category/resources-for-same-gender-blessings/>