

Claiming the Blessing Platform

A Proclamation for the Episcopal Church

The Claiming the Blessing (CTB) Steering Committee is an all-volunteer committee representing a broad constituency of progressive Episcopal voices. Members are LGBT and straight, lay and ordained, old and young –all with a deep love of The Episcopal Church and a firm commitment to classic Anglicanism.

As baptized Christians, we commit our lives to:

- The celebration of the goodness of all creatures and creation as given to us by God;
- Our relationship with Jesus the Christ;
- The discernment of truth as revealed in Holy Scripture and the work of the Spirit;
- The indivisibility of spirituality, prayer and politics as modeled by the prophets and apostles;
- Peace with justice as proclaimed by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.;
- Truth and reconciliation as articulated by Archbishop Desmond Tutu;
- The vision of the Beloved Community as revealed in the table fellowship of Jesus.

We come to the 2006 General Convention in Columbus compelled to communicate our identity, articulate our beliefs and convey our sense of call to prophetic action and pastoral presence.

Therefore, we call the Church to:

- Work for full civil marriage equality.
- Clarify our theology of marriage, family and human sexuality.
- Oppose the limitation of adoption and other civil contracts on the basis of sexual orientation, marital status, gender identity and expression.
- Study the role of clergy as civil magistrates in marriage.
- Reaffirm the sacredness of long-term committed relationships, as articulated in D039 “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.” (GC 2000)
- Authorize the development of liturgical rites of blessings where civil marriage, civil unions and domestic partnerships are a reality, and elsewhere.
- Support universal domestic partnership benefits.
- Affirm human rights for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people worldwide.
- Work for an end to the violence against LGBT people throughout the global village.
- Engage the international community in a listening process which includes the active voices and full presence of LGBT people.

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- Embrace a theology of abundance; reject the theology of scarcity, fear and scapegoating; and commit ourselves to proclaim and live the good news of Christ Jesus.
- Reaffirm that all orders of ministry are open to all the Baptized who are otherwise qualified.
- Establish as church policy the commitment not to meet in those places where justice and liberation for all God's children, including LGBT people, are absent in state law or local ordinance.

For the Claiming the Blessing Steering Committee: Peggy Adams, J. Edwin Bacon, Jr., Cynthia Black, John Clinton Bradley, Kim Byham, Louie Crew, Cy Deavours, Lyn Headley-Deavours, Ethan Vesely-Flad, Michael Hopkins, Elizabeth Kaeton, John Kirkley, Joseph Lane, Christine Mackey-Mason, Susan Russell, Jason Samuel, Katie Sherrod, John Simonelli, Jim White