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Church of the Redeemer

Dear Members of the Church of the Redeemer:

Below is the statement issued by our Diocesan Bishop, the Right Rev. Clifton Daniel, after the recent U.S. District Court decision making same-sex marriage legal in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

This letter warrants careful reading--not only for the license it provides for priests to conduct services of The Witnessing and Blessing of a Lifelong Covenant--but, just as much, for how it frames this new understanding of our common life within the classic disciplines of the Episcopal tradition, which give form and substance to our Christian faith.

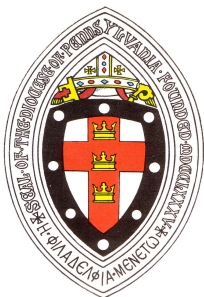
In light of the Bishop's letter, the vestry has unanimously chosen to affirm the use of this liturgy. As Bishop Daniel has noted, "the shape of marriage has changed vastly over the centuries and the change continues... It is the work and ministry of the Church to bring people to unity with God and one another; it is the very nature of marriage to show forth through intimate human relationships 'the mystery of the union between Christ and his Church.'"

This unity is a sign of the redemption to which we all are called, as witnesses and participants. We have before us the opportunity to live more fully into our name, as people of the Church of the Redeemer.

In Christ,



The Rev. Peter Vanderveen, Rector



*Office of the Bishop
Episcopal Diocese of Pennsylvania
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania*

May 22, 2014

Dear Friends in Christ,

As of May 20, the marriage of same sex couples is now allowable in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and I rejoice in this development.

The understandings of what constitutes marriage and family have evolved significantly over time and especially the last few generations. The shape of marriage has changed vastly over the centuries and the change continues. It is clear that the definition of what and who constitutes a family is under examination and open to modification and new understandings of the nature of human relationships. It is the work and ministry of the Church to bring people to unity with God and one another; it is the very nature of marriage to show forth through intimate human relationships "...the mystery of the union between Christ and his Church." (Paul's Letter to the Church in Ephesus/The Book of Common Prayer, page 423)

For several decades, The Episcopal Church has been faithful in seeking understanding in what God is calling us to in relation to matters of sexuality and marriage. I have come to believe that marriage is the union of two people to live together in fidelity, love and unity until death parts them whether the partners in the marriage are of the same or different genders. I pray that all married persons become ever more signs to a broken world of the unity God intends for all people and that they become channels of God's love into the lives of those around them.

As Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Pennsylvania, I give my permission to the Priests of this Diocese to marry persons of the same gender, though in accord with our Canons, no Priest is required to do so. In addition to following the legal requirements of the State, the Canonical policies and procedures that apply to heterosexual couples desiring to be married are now extended to include persons of the same gender who wish to be married.

Thankfully, The Episcopal Church is part of a broad catholic and reformed Christian tradition that allows for unity even in the midst of disagreement. Not all members of this Church will agree with this decision. In The Episcopal Church, there is room for all people of good conscience and good will toward their neighbor to gather as one around God's altar.

Only the liturgical form approved by the General Convention of The Episcopal Church will be used ([accessible here](#)). The rubrics of the rite state that the bishop may authorize modifications of the Pronouncement, and I authorize the following modification: "Now that N. and N. have given themselves to each other by solemn vows, with the joining of hands and the giving and receiving of rings, I pronounce that they are married, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and

of the Holy Spirit. Those whom God has joined together let no one put asunder."

May God bless us all, and God "...grant that all married persons find their lives strengthened and their loyalties confirmed." (The Book of Common Prayer, page 430)

Faithfully,

Clifton Daniel, 3rd

Clifton Daniel, 3rd
Bishop, Episcopal Diocese of Pennsylvania



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