



File:	This Item	Replaces
	2.1.4	2.1.4
Date:	Dec. 2019	Dec. 2011

Diocese of Kootenay

Policy for Same-Gender Marriage

Process for authorization for same-gender marriages within a congregation:
(this is adapted from the process that has been in place in the Diocese of Kootenay since 2011 regarding same-sex blessings, Bishop's policy 2.1.4)

The marriage of same-gender couples requires pastoral sensitivity in discerning the ministry of the whole congregation(s). Marriages are authorized for any licensed priest after requesting and receiving, permission from the Bishop after due consultation with the congregation.

Due consultation process will include the following:

1. a. Individual parishes will determine for themselves the appropriate way of engaging with this issue, which also means leaving parishes free to decide not to engage in it. ("All parishes may; no parish must.")
b. Parish conversations could include past statements such as "This Holy Estate" and General Synod 2019 "A Word to the Church".
c. Following the process used in the parish, the parish reports the results to the Bishop. The report will outline the process of parish discernment, and make a formal request to the Bishop for permission to offer same-gender marriage.
d. It is strongly recommended that this NOT be put to a congregational vote.
2. Our Diocese will honour the diversity represented in our congregations. All clergy and people are called upon to exercise pastoral generosity toward one another.
3. No priest or congregation will be required to participate in services of same-gender marriage, and if either priest or congregation do not concur, permission will not be given.

4. If a couple wish to seek a marriage in their home congregation, and their priest or congregation has decided not to participate, alternative pastoral arrangements should be made.

5. When a change of incumbent occurs in a parish that has had due consultation, has chosen to proceed with this pastoral ministry, and has episcopal permission to proceed, the permission remains in place through a change in incumbency. It is expected that when the diocese advertises a position at a change of incumbents, the parish profile will indicate that the parish has permission for same-gender marriage and expects the new incumbent to offer this sacramental ministry.

6. For marriages, as well as the BAS with appropriate adaptation, the Bishop authorizes two rites of The Episcopal Church, *The Witnessing and Blessing of a Marriage* and *The Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage 2*.

Clergy who plan to use another rite are required to consult with the Bishop at least a month in advance of the ceremony.