

Summary Time Line of Conversations Relating to Same-Sex Unions in the Anglican Church of Canada and the Diocese of Huron



For full details, please see the Background Paper on the Marriage Canon prepared by the Marriage Canon Task Force:

<https://diohuron.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Background-Paper-on-Marriage-Canon-.pdf>

- 1979 Resolution (“Statement on Sexuality”) by the House of Bishops to accept homosexuals as equal before God but not to accept homosexual activity or the blessing of homosexual unions.
- 1995 General Synod approves motion to affirm the presence and contributions of gay men and lesbians in the life of the Church.
- 1995 The Diocese of Huron Synod passes motion condemning the mistreatment of homosexual people and endorsing the 1979 Statement of the House of Bishops.
- 1997 House of Bishops Statement on Human Sexuality affirms the traditional teaching that only the sexual union of male and female can find appropriate expression within the covenant of Holy Matrimony and declines to authorize the blessing of relationships between persons of the same sex.
- 1998 Lambeth Conference of Bishops calls for a pastoral response to LGBTQ Christians but rejects “homosexual practice as incompatible with scripture” and the “legitimising or blessing of same sex unions.”
- 2002 The Synod of the Diocese of New Westminster approves the blessing of same-sex relationships.
- 2003 The Lambeth Commission on Communion established to consider the question of unity in the Communion in the wake of the consecration of the openly gay Rt. Revd. Gene Robinson as a bishop in the Episcopal Church in the United States and of the move of the Diocese of New Westminster in the Anglican Church of Canada to bless same-sex marriages.
- 2004 General Synod approves a resolution to “affirm the integrity and sanctity of committed adult same sex relationships.” Primate’s Theological Commission charged to consider whether the blessing of committed same-sex unions is a matter of doctrine. The resulting St. Michael Report (2005) concludes that it is but that it is not core doctrine.

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- 2005 Civil marriage between same-sex couples becomes legal across Canada.
 - 2006 Diocese of Huron Synod defeats a motion to adopt the views of the St. Michael Report.
 - 2007 House of Bishops releases a statement advocating for “the most generous pastoral response possible within the current teaching of the church” to requests for the blessing of same-sex unions. A pastoral response may include celebrating a Eucharist with the couple, including appropriate intercessory prayers, but not including the exchange of vows or a nuptial blessing.
 - 2008 Diocese of Huron Synod passes a motion to request that the Bishop grant permission to clergy to bless the civil marriages of same-sex couples. No action was taken to authorize the blessing of same-sex unions in Huron at that time.
 - 2009 Liturgical resource approved by the Bishop of Huron to provide for prayers for a civilly married same-sex couple within the context of the celebration of the Eucharist. It conforms to the 2007 Statement of the House of Bishops.
 - 2013 The Bishop of Huron approves a revision of the 2009 rite which includes public vows, the blessing of rings, and a nuptial blessing. It may be used for the blessing of any civilly married couple, regardless of sex.
 - 2013 General Synod passes a resolution directing the Council of General Synod to prepare and present a motion at General Synod 2016 to change the Marriage Canon to allow the marriage of same-sex couples. A Commission to carry out this resolution was established by Council of General Synod in November 2013.
 - 2015 *This Holy Estate*, the Report of the Commission on the Marriage Canon, is released.
 - 2016 The resolution to change the Marriage Canon is passed by General Synod. In order to come into force, it must be passed again by General Synod in 2019.